Why Women Cry

WENCHES WITH WRENCHES

BY ELIZABETH HAWES

"Women, unite!" says Elizabeth Hawes, who also said "Fashion is Spinach." In **WHY WOMEN CRY** Miss Hawes sets the entire male-female world on its ear, calling as she does for an end to feudal families and slave wives. Men are going to be amused and a little scared by it; women will find it both hilarious and practical. It's a book for all females distracted by dishes, children, housework, husbands. And if it's for all males who don't know about the revolution brewing in their own kitchens (to say nothing of upstairs!). Miss Hawes airs the dilemma of war-working and all working wives and mothers, and comes out with ideas based upon the experience of all kinds of women whom she has known and has worked with. She speaks frankly about Les Riches Bitches, She-Wolves, Wenches, and Clubwomen; about unions, child care, sex, and beauty. Her conclusions are startling and thoroughly Hawesian. At the very least they'll intrigue you; at the most, they may shape a new era.

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WHY WOMEN CRY

or

Wenches With Wrenches

Other Books by Elizabeth Hawes

FASHION IS SPINACH

MEN CAN TAKE IT

WHY IS A DRESS?

Why Women Cry

OR

WENCHES WITH WRENCHES

BY ELIZABETH HAWES

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THIS BOOK is dedicated to the following people and organizations without whom it could never have been, and with fondest hopes that they, at least, may all one day cooperate to solve the problems raised in these pages:

Hawes, Inc., Pete, Fanny, J. P. Morgan, Ed, Stella, The United Automobile Workers, Al, Helena Rubenstein, The Congress of Industrial Organizations, Joseph Losey, The Committee for the Care of Young Children in Wartime, Gavrik Losey, The United States Government, Fiorello LaGuardia, J. Q. Riznik, The Government of the State of New York, Alexey Brodovitch.

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In The Beginning

This book is addressed to all women who have ever felt that if, without a vacation of some sort, they must wash that dish, iron that shirt, cook that meal, see that child, kiss that husband again, they would go mad. It is also addressed to all the women who fear they will go mad if ever they have to wash the dishes, iron their husbands' shirts, do all the cooking, and take full care of their children every day.

This book is for those women. And for all the men who are thinking about marrying, or are married to such women.

Maybe the book is even a little more for those men than for the women. Because a great many men have never thought about these homely matters—and if they don't start thinking soon, they may very well be overtaken by a major revolt on the part of their wives and prospective wives. A lot of men already have found their homes being run a little unsatisfactorily. They have found their wives a trifle glum and their children a bit quarrelsome.

But how would the men like to find themselves without any homes or wives or children at all?

The world has been told, to the vomiting point, that a revolution is now in progress. Men: this revolution is likely to be brewing right in your own kitchen. It's likely to hit

your home just as soon or sooner than anywhere else.

For we also have all been notified that the day of the Common Man is coming up. Don't think the Common Woman is just sitting around preparing to spend the whole of that day in the kitchen. Over five million American women between the ages of twenty and thirty-five have gone on record as wishing to have successful careers. Two thirds of the group wished to combine the career with marriage. Many millions more would be added to this number if women over thirty-five, especially those whose children are now grown, were consulted.

Whether or not a woman has a "career," surely the vast majority of American women do not believe that woman's place is solely in the home. Equally surely the vast majority of American women want a home, a husband, and children. This book is concerned with ways and means of keeping the home and letting the female as well as the male get away from it from time to time.

Although this book was written in wartime, whether or not it is read before or after a peace is declared, is of little importance. You will see as I report that the behavior of most of the workers in the airplane engine plant and of the various types of men and women in other kinds of work in wartime, has not changed very radically from what it was before the war. The basic problems of women have not changed at all. War has only sharpened the problems.

It is not the purpose of this book to lay out plans for winning the war and the peace in a hurry or taking care of the welfare of the majority of the people in wartime, al-

though many of the suggestions I shall make are essential to these ends in my opinion.

I have worked in a war plant and it was one of the most interesting and stimulating experiences of my life. Every American woman should be fighting for the chance to get a job in mass production not only to help win the war but also for her personal gratification. Any average woman can learn to do the work and do it well. Any woman in normal health can handle the job without difficulty or detriment to her health.

But no woman can do such a job well, no woman can do any job outside her home well, if she must at the same time perform all the traditional housewife's duties as well. It is an exhausting and bitter struggle to care for a house, for one's husband and children, and at the same time try and do another job. It is a struggle in which everyone loses out—the employer, the husband, the kids, the woman. In wartime the battles lost by women war workers are called "absenteeism" and "labor-turnover." The way to win the battles of absenteeism and labor-turnover among women war workers is to give them a hand with their houses and their kids.

My concern in this book is with the running of the American Home. Whether we are at war or peace, the methods of doing this well are identical.

For many years before the war, and now, during the war, family life in the USA has been run along Eighteenth Century lines. The gruesome effects of an attempt to live in a highly developed, Twentieth Century, capitalist so-

ciety and run the family in a feudal way are given out on the radio every Sunday night by one Dr. Anthony. Dissatisfaction, fights, broken homes, thwarted children, these have been the results.

When the family was a neat little economic unit (as it is on some farms today), when every member had his work to do in order to keep things going, then the family, as we are still trying to preserve it, worked out. The father raised the food, with some help from mother and much from the children. The heat was provided by the logs father cut in the back woods. The clothes might be made of the wool from the sheep raised in the back pasture. The mother spun and wove, canned food, made bread, cooked. The little money the family ever saw came from selling a few of the products which resulted from the mutual family efforts.

Now the father goes off to work in one place and the children rush away to school or play or work some other place. The grocery store and department store furnish everything the family wears and eats. Heat and power come by the ton, gallon, or foot. The woman—the mother—either attends to the housekeeping herself, with the help of mechanical contrivances, and looks after the children, or she hires servants to do part or all of this.

Few could hire servants before the war, fewer now. Among those fortunate few, some women have managed to have a husband, home, and children, and also do creative and satisfying work outside that home. But we are now engaged in a war the purpose of which, as I see it, is to abolish all servants—the servants of Hitler and Hirohito,

of the British, Dutch, French, and other empires—and our personal servants.

The life of average servants is little better than that of slaves. A large part of their wage is accounted for by the bed and board they receive. They are not allowed to leave that bed and board for more than a few hours a week. They are definitely not expected to lead lives of their own but to stick to the old plantation through thick and thin.

The quicker this debased class of humanity is abolished and replaced by professionals in housekeeping and child care, the better off will be even those families who heretofore have been privileged to hire servants. But as most people never had a servant, the major problem is really how to run a home without turning the wife into a servant.

Of course every woman wants some kind of work outside her home. No woman on God's earth wants to have her entire life swing around a solitary, boring, repetitive business which means exhausting herself washing the same dishes and clothes day in and day out—cooking food for the same people, seldom seeing a living soul other than a tired husband and her own children for more than a very short time.

Certainly any woman can be a "good wife" and a "good mother" and do other and creative work outside her own little love nest. But she cannot do all this without our working out some system whereby all may have the benefits which a few have had by hiring servants. We must take the running of the American Home out of the days of the covered wagon.

It takes a great many people to make the things which have replaced the covered wagon—automobiles, airplanes, railroads—and it takes all those people working together to produce the desired results. It will take a great many people working together to replace the hired servant and the wife-servant.

As I understand the meaning of a democracy, it is an organization where everyone works together for mutual benefit. We have had, by that definition, comparatively little democratic action in the USA. We have had almost no direct democratic action on the part of the majority of women. Most women have never dreamed of working together, certainly not as far as running their homes goes. Even less have they seriously considered working out anything with men in connection with these problems.

My personal qualifications for writing this book hinge mainly on the fact that I have managed to know personally and work with every type of woman I can think of in the USA.

For over a decade I ran a very expensive custom-made clothing business for which I did all the designing. By the time you have finished designing and seeing to the fitting and making of a dress for any woman, there is practically nothing you don't know about her, mentally and physically.

During this period I delved into a good deal of atmosphere less rarified than that of Hawes, Inc. I designed all sorts of inexpensive women's wears, traveled around the country helping sell them, and made two lecture tours. But, nevertheless, I was anything but an average woman, hav-

ing three Afghan hounds, a perfectly wonderful maid all for me, and an extremely comfortable apartment atop the Ivory Tower which was also my private dressmaking establishment.

Finally, owing to disgust with my retail business, and the fact I saw a war coming up and thought it would probably do the business in, I closed the place up in January, 1940. I then went to work for a brand new newspaper called PM. I undertook the editorship of what we called PM's News For Living—those departments connected with food, clothing, beauty, housing, and education. Since it was the original purpose of PM to cater to people of low income, I got myself quite an education on how all these problems of living did or did not work out for people who couldn't afford servants, expensive homes, and private schools.

For the first year and a half after the USA entered the war I spent a great deal of time, sometimes 18 hours a day, working with a so-called mass organization to get care for the children of working mothers in wartime. Through this committee I knew and worked with many Trade Union leaders, male and female. Even more important to this book, I met and worked with hundreds of Common Women, fine salt-of-the-earth females, housewives and mothers as well as workers.

Finally I decided I still hadn't met and worked with one kind of American woman, so I took a job at a Wright Aeronautical war plant. There I joined the United Automobile Workers. I consider myself qualified to speak as a

Common Woman because I know that all other kinds of women certainly consider a woman trade unionist a Common Woman. So do I. But I will probably get mixed up from time to time in this book and speak as the other kind of woman I have been.

There are many types of women in the USA and there are, among almost all the types, women who want a better and more efficient method for running the American Home. There are women of almost every type who must be willing to work with other women to achieve that end.

Into whatever category of women I may fall personally, I wish to make it plain that I prefer Common Women to any other type. I wish the women of America no better fate than that they shall all one day be able to call themselves Common.

I am hopeful that American women—and men—will speedily become Common enough to work together for a solution of our common problems. I am terrified we may not start soon enough to avert the Hitlerian routine of children-kitchen-church for the next generations of Common American women and do away with economic slavery for their husbands. I am terrified because it's not certain today that tomorrow we will not have Fascism in the United States.

Part 1 The Line-Up

The Contented Cow

I have never met a contented housewife. But as there are such a vociferous bunch of people constantly preaching that woman's place is in the home—and as these are so many of them prominent and upstanding members of the community, I must force myself to assume that somewhere there is a female who is perfectly contented with the lot of housewife.

Somewhere there is a female who arises every morning and cheerily gets the breakfast for her husband and children. Every morning she happily sends the children off to school and the husband off to work and cleans or supervises the cleaning of the house. Week after week she either does the laundry or sees that it is done—and loves it.

Day in and day out this phenomenal female orders or buys the family food, never complaining about the budget or the hours she waits at the super-market, nor about anything.

At three every afternoon she welcomes the children home from school and never fusses over how much noise they

make or how much confusion reigns. Every evening she kisses her husband hello—or does not kiss him if he's not feeling that way. But whatever way it goes, she is always contented about it.

Never does she feel like throwing all the dishes on the floor instead of re-washing them for the millionth time. Never does she have that impulse to kick the little tot who crawls up her leg as she attempts to clean the floor. Never never never does she ask herself why she married this man who is too tired even to take her to the movies. Never never never never does she tell the man what a bad maid is Helen or what a time she had finding any steak that day.

And, I must further suppose, that never does this happy housewife turn on her radio and lose herself in the romantic activities of the latest morning serial. Never does she imagine for a minute that perhaps it is to her the hero with the wonderful voice is speaking so luringly over the air waves. For, if she were so very happy with her lot, she would throw-up if she listened to that guff every morning. Nor would she ever want to see those movies where she can escape into a never-never world peopled with strong, rich men, cars, servants, beautiful clothes, beautiful scenery. She doesn't need anything but her soul-satisfying duties as a housewife.

There must be a woman like this somewhere—or how could intelligent, civic-minded people keep saying: "Woman's place is in the home!"

The women who say it have plenty of time, of course, to go out of their homes. They aren't talking about themselves.

The men who say it have never been housewives—and they are usually married to women who don't practice housewifery as their sole pursuit. But it can't be that all these fine people just dreamed there was somewhere such a contented housewife.

Somewhere there *must* be a woman who would rather be a housewife all day long than do anything else in the world. Lulled by the monotony of it all, she is the woman who never cries. However tough the breaks, she knows she can lose herself in the dishpan and forget.

Oh happy woman! Oh Contented Cow! The rest of us women do not envy you one bit. We've never seen such a female—we never hope to see one—and under no circumstances would any of us want to be one.

Forgotten Females

The majority of American women are Forgotten Females. They never receive any attention of any kind except when someone remembers to remind them women's place is in the home and that they are Noble because they are Mothers.

Nobody has ever made a serious attempt to lighten their

work. Their lives are actually children-kitchen-church. Anything which appears to be an effort to make their work lighter is merely an attempt to sell one more housekeeping device on the installment plan. Their family income usually falls under $2,500 a year, the category into which some 87% of American families fall.

Some of these women are fighting—hard—to get better education for their children; to get themselves a little time off from the kitchen and the children so they can fight harder. But many of the Forgotten Females who would like to have their household cares lightened, who want better education for their children, labeled canned goods, and the thousand other things which would make life easier for them—many of them are guileless in the extreme. They believe that all the women who have time to do things outside their homes are actually concerned with the problems of the Forgotten Female. They think other women will see that their problems are solved.

An awful lot of Forgotten Females have ceased to act for themselves. They should be innoculated with a little of the blood of the She-Wolves—because what they need as individuals is what practically everyone needs!

The husbands of Forgotten Females are some of them Forgotten Men. Like their wives, they sometimes think life is pretty bad but that someone else will make it better for them—some day.

But a great many males earning under $2,500 per year, who get along quite nicely in their offices and shops and who even energetically engage in activities to better their

salaries, are married to Forgotten Females. They consider their wives nice girls and all that. These men often love their wives very much. But none of them ever stopped to think what it was he was getting that nice girl in for, when he married her. Too often he isn't thinking about just what kind of a life she leads now.

My mother cleaned and cooked and raised a family, says Joe. My wife cleans and cooks and raises a family. What was good enough for me is good enough for my kids.

You and your wife both need a nice transfusion of She-Wolf blood, Joe.

Ladies were a great institution. There are still a few left in the world, the remnants of true aristocracy.

The main job of Ladies has always been running large homes and families to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. Their husbands, children, servants, guests, and the relatives of all these people, admire and often even love the Lady of the house, the leader of the house.

The Ladies still extant in these years of Our War Lords are all rich, of course. For if you have all the attributes of

a Lady but no money, you are known as a Gentlewoman.

Unlike other rich women, Ladies aren't at all impressed with their wealth. They know exactly how much money they have and thoughtfully spend every cent available each year—but not one cent over.

In their homes you never notice the servants. Nobody ever casually mentions the price of the fine old brandy you drink after dinner. It seems as if God has provided everything you want—but it is the Lady who has done so, efficiently and without betraying any of the mechanism which makes it all possible.

I had a few Ladies as customers at *Hawes, Inc.* They knew exactly what kind of clothes they wanted and what price they could pay. But they never haggled about a price. The saleswomen loved them. The Ladies were firm as to how their clothes should fit. The fitters adored them. If the Ladies needed some little errand done, the apprentice who carried out the request was flattered by the doing of it.

Ladies are never—absolutely never—rude or thoughtless. They are never 100% concerned with their own lives. If the saleslady had a baby, they knew and discussed all the problems with her. If the fitter was troubled with arthritis, they seriously offered excellent advice. If Miss Hawes was tired and didn't want to see them, they never made a fuss, just sent her a bunch of flowers or a pot of jam to brace her up.

The Ladies I know are quite aware of everything that's going on in the world. But we must not count on them to step out of their roles and actively help the rest of us solve

our basic problems. They will not work with us because that would involve their ceasing to be Ladies.

They are right in this, I think. They are rare and beautiful and their time is short. They should go on as they always have. They were not born to go into trade or politics. Their activity in those fields has always been limited to offering excellent advice to their husbands and friends.

Often I wish there were more Ladies. I like having them lay their cool hands on my forehead while they make sharp, intelligent comments on life in general—and in particular.

We do not have to be afraid that any of these Ladies will try to slow down the wheels of progress. Ladies were among the first to realize that society is in for a big change.

Months ago I had the great pleasure of visiting a Lady and Gentleman in their absolutely wonderful home in Florida. I was taken for dinner to what the gentleman called "the most plush-buttomed club in the United States." It was all of that and the food was perfect.

As we came out after dinner, the Lady turned to me and said cheerily: "Can't you imagine what a marvelous time the Bolsheviks will have with this place when they take it over!"

I knew another Lady who travelled with her husband across Russia a few years before the war, on her way to some diplomatic gathering in Japan.

"I got a guide in Moscow," she told me, "and I went to see everything I had time for. I think it's perfectly wonderful. I believe something like it will certainly happen here

and I'm completely for it. But," she added, "you know I'm an old woman and I'm awfully spoiled. I like all this."

She waved her hand around her charming room into which her personal maid was carrying our tea. "I don't know what I'd do without it. I want the change to come—but," she laughed, "I hope I'm dead before it does."

She and all the Ladies will undoubtedly be dead before any Bolsheviks take over here. Should the Fascists take hold, most of the husbands of the Ladies will wangle a way to see that their wives die in comfort. There are, by the way, fewer Gentlemen than Ladies in the world. The majority of the Gentlemen had to engage in trade and politics and you can succeed in neither and continue to have any real concern with anyone's interests but your own. The few Gentlemen who do remain are delightful people for the same reasons their Ladies are a pleasure to know.

The Ladies will not come out and help to make the Common American Home run better. But they are not against seeing it happen. They've had their great day with no dishwashing and no cooking and no laundry and, being Ladies, they are not against seeing the favors more widely distributed.

In plain English these women would be known as the Rich Bitches—but as there is nothing plain about them, it seems more fitting to give them a French accent. (No intended insult to the French people, of course!) Many of these women are as common as dirt in the pre-Wallace sense of the word. But they feel distinctly uncommon on account of their cash which they regard as something wonderful.

Les Riches Bitches have but one object in view—and that is to have more clothes and more jewelry and more houses and cars and servants than anyone else. If having more husbands than anyone else is going to make them able to have more of the other things, they do that too. Usually they have a few children, as an excuse for hanging onto their husbands, who often get restive, or because they wish to have something to get cash for in case there is a divorce.

It was these bitches who drove me out of my custom-made clothing business.

Whatever they did in my shop, wherever they went, as far as they were concerned there was no one in the place

but them—and some faint shadows who flitted about showing them clothes, dragging out the contents of a hundred drawers of gadgets, getting them drinks. There was no one in the nation but them—and just one world—their world. I know their world, know their pattern of life.

A young and handsome married woman turns up and orders a few clothes. It develops in the course of the conversation she is going with her husband to visit his boss in Palm Beach.

Several months later the clothes are not paid for. Finally after a good deal of prodding, the woman's mother, a Gentlewoman, turns up with a checkbook full of $15 checks dated ahead for months and months. She apologizes for her daughter's inability to pay her bills. We accept the checkbook and start cashing the checks one by one.

A year later along comes daughter. She is now Mrs. A. Rich Bitch, married to her former husband's boss. She has lots of beautiful jewels. She is as thin as half a rail and as nervous as everyone wished Hitler were in 1943. She buys clothes—$25,000 worth the first year.

Here's how she buys clothes: She dashes into the place early in the morning, in an awful rush because it seems she has to get furniture for the servants' rooms in the house in Canada. Also she is very worried about the daughter of her first husband whom she had brought along to the second and who she thinks will probably be kidnapped because there have been mysterious telephone calls. This is, of course, due to the Roosevelt administration.

Because she was so pretty before and rather sweet, Miss

Hawes in person is still putting up with her. This particular morning, after pouring out her troubles, she says, "I must have something to wear for breakfast after we go hunting in South Carolina. It is quite cold then."

So Miss Hawes gets out some light woolen goods and makes a few rough sketches in the twinkling of an eye and the female suddenly rises to her feet and says, "That's a nice one. About how much will that be? About $175? I'll have six—different colors—different material. You just make up what you think will be nice."

Out she jumps.

Miss Hawes then has a nervous breakdown, saying why should she waste her talents on the desert air. The bitch doesn't need six and will just give five of them away after the first wearing. The salesgal who is paid on a commission basis soothes Miss Hawes, reminding her of the $25,000 and promising never to let this customer see Miss Hawes again as she knows it will end in disaster—to her commissions.

The pay-off comes however when the salesgal slides uneasily into Miss Hawes office one day the next year and says, "Mrs. A. Rich Bitch bought this silver fox cape the other day and she forgot at the time that her husband does not like her ever to wear anything without white around the neck. So can you dream up some way to put white around the neck of this cape—please?"

Although I hadn't seen Mrs. A in months, I knew she'd been assiduously trying to please her husband by destroying all my designs—having little white collars added to

them. It turned out, she had to have white on her hunting clothes because if you don't, a hunter may come rolling through the woods and shoot you by mistake. And we had all decided maybe her husband thought if she didn't have white on all her clothes, someone would shoot her by mistake right on Fifth Ave.

"Tell her to take the thing someplace else," I said briefly. "I'm not interested."

This was one of the quickest ways I could think of to collapse my business.

Then there was Mrs. B. Rich Bitch who only spent about $10,000 a year on Hawes clothes. She was in such a condition, having gotten one of the richest men to be had and therefore seeing no brighter future ahead, that she could often stand still to be fitted for only five or ten minutes at a time. Then she'd say she'd be back tomorrow and sort of ooze away. This threw all our production plans into a cocked hat and drove the fitter insane.

Once Mrs. B, after spending seven weeks deciding which evening dress to get in black, and after fitting it twenty times and not being able to make up her mind whether to have the neck high or low, finally had it low. So it was cut and finished and sent.

The next morning her salesgal came into my office and said, "She has phoned to say she has decided she would rather have the neck high after all. It means making another whole dress. She will pay for another whole dress (price $375.00). But Mrs. Green (the fitter) says she can't stand it. She says Mrs. B is driving her crazy. She says she

won't make her another dress. So will you speak to Mrs. Green—please?"

"You can tell Mrs. Green I'm entirely on her side and tell Mrs. B. Rich Bitch she can't get any more clothes here because she is driving Mrs. Green mad." That, I thought, should also help kill the business.

But Mrs. B fooled me. She wasn't to be foiled in her scheme to send us to the insane asylum. She came in all contrite and apologized to Mrs. Green and the whole thing just started off again.

When you visit at the homes of these Rich Bitches, the first thing that happens is a new butler opens the door and gives you notice with one look that once he worked for a Lady and he is only in this place because he gets twice the money—and besides his Lady has died.

If he has previously seen you in his Lady's house, he spends the evening or the weekend practically winking at you as each new horror unfolds. He gives the Rich Bitch openings, such as asking which brandy she wants—openings which allow her to tell you how she came by the brandy at $100 the bottle. Then he gives you the eye which tells you this isn't even the brandy she paid that for, which wasn't worth it in the first place, and she doesn't know the difference anyway.

Once I spent the weekend in the home of one of these creatures, a home which had been brought over bit by bit from England. The rooms were all done in different styles or periods—like the Normandie bedroom and the Marie Antoinette salon and the little Chinese nook and so on.

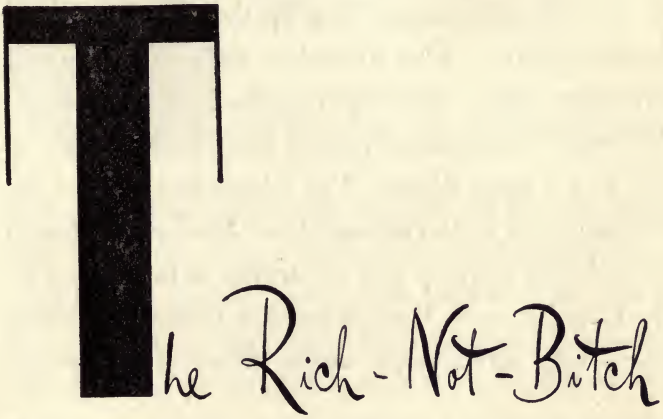
Everything in each room was just perfect—especially the match boxes, all hand done in the right style and with the part where you want to strike the match well worn away.

I arrived for the weekend on Friday night and by Saturday afternoon I realized I was being tailed. Everywhere I went, a little maid would follow. Somewhat concerned, I suddenly discovered that I was constantly putting down a worn out matchbox and picking up another. I carted the Normandie boxes into the Chinese nook and the Marie Antoinette boxes into the Indian corner, always trying to find one box which would work. The instant my back was turned, the little maid would pick up the misplaced box and carry it back where it belonged. Then she would quietly return to my backside and take up her ceaseless watch again. I left early Sunday morning.

I had an unhappy lunch with a batch of Rich Bitches during the invasion of Italy and as far as I could make out, the servant problem had taken precedence over everything. I got the general impression that for every one of them the main objective of winning this war was so the Rich Bitches could stop paying these ridiculously high wages to their domestic help and get the servants once more to recognize their place in the world.

I am utterly convinced we can count on absolutely no help from the Rich Bitches in solving the basic problems of other women. Their advice, even if they wanted to give it, would be of value on only one point. The one thing they know about is how to keep the body beautiful and dress divinely in fine raiment.

Not only can we expect no help from these women but they will fight us to the last ditch. If Hitler told them he'd guarantee their having servants forever, they'd invite him over. They—and their husbands—are our avowed enemies. It would be unwise to underestimate their strength even if they are comparatively few in number. Their husbands control a large part of everything anyone needs or wants and Les Riches Bitches control their husbands by the unsubtle methods of the average strumpet.



There is a minute but invaluable class of females who are rich but not bitches. Had this coterie been born in the last century, they would have been Ladies. Born too late to fall into that pattern, they spend a goodly portion of their time and money on good works. They assiduously attend meetings of Boards of Directors of privately run charities. They lend their names and social prestige to Causes and hit their rich friends and acquaintances on the head to get money for same. The Causes extend all the way from baby clinics to getting political refugees out of Europe.

Most of these women are extremely bright and energetic people who, had they not been born with (or married) money would have done very well in the commercial field. They run their homes with great efficiency, but unlike Ladies, they devote the major portion of their time to outside work.

Without their help many of the movements to get something done for the Common people would fail in the initial stages. Most of them, however, recognize that their personal fortunes are not sufficient to keep up the vast network of useful private charity. They know how difficult it is getting to remove large sums of money from the Rich Bitches and their husbands—even after plying them with plenty of cocktails and a good dinner. The Riches-Not-Bitches are therefore lining up on the side of those who never believed in private charity anyway and are trying to help bring on the day of the Common Man by making former charitable enterprises into government duties financed by public funds.

Riches-Not-Bitches are good and useful women, clear headed and realistic. Some of them may be expected to finance a few of the future experiments aimed at replacing the horse-drawn home with the horseless carriage type. In many cases, their brains and organizing ability will be even more useful than their money.

It is the husbands of these women who, regardless of hatred for or mistrust of the New Deal, lined up with Roosevelt for the winning of the war. Naturally no Rich-Not-Bitch wants to lose all his or her power and money.

But these people see clearly that in order to save a part of what they have, the goods of this world must be more fairly distributed pretty quickly. Otherwise the "have-nots" may decide to grab everything.

Females brought up to be Ladies but finding themselves with no money are generally known as Gentlewomen. They only remain gentle, however, as long as they refrain from trying to do anything about their financial condition. As old maid aunts or widows with a few hundred dollars a year income, they may pursue a kindly and often useful course through life, helping out with their brothers' and sisters' children or just living along without bothering anyone.

However, when the Gentlewoman, bitten with a desire to better her economic state, or because her few hundred dollars a year income ceases to exist, goes into any sort of business, then there is hell to pay. Upon discovering that no one can be gainfully employed and quite remain a Lady, these Not-So-Gentlewomen out-bitch all others.

They normally are employed in the trades catering to women. They prefer jobs where they come in contact with rich people. They feel such work does not unbecome them —who would also be rich had it not been for the bank crash, or whatever it was.

You find them welcoming you at the desks of expensive hairdressers, selling you clothes in expensive shops, or ushering you to luncheon tables in expensive little tea rooms. They treat the Common People, who do the work to which they usher you, the way they consider common people should be treated.

Some of them are endowed with brains and energy and they get into department stores and advertising agencies and other places where someone with "taste" is needed to assist in "raising the level of the masses."

They are constantly crying over the ungentlemanly treatment of the men who hire them or have to work with them and over the unladylike behavior of the she-wolves who get much more money than they do and are never gentle. Usually during a depression, they are the first to be fired, which is just what they deserve.

When I see one of them coming, I run like a rabbit. But once last summer I didn't run fast enough and I had to walk several blocks down Fifth Avenue with one who probably hasn't had a servant in years but feels as if she has had a dozen of them. What the Rich Bitch has to say on that subject, is pale compared to what the Not-So-Gentlewoman thinks of a world in which servants actually resent being called servants and are demanding an eight-hour day.

Could I have done as I felt, I would have picked this female up by the scruff of her long neck and thrown her right into the middle of Wright Aeronautical Plant Seven. It would have killed her or cured her—and I think it would have killed her.

Most of these females have no husbands.

A couple of generations or more ago, there was a fanatical group of females known as Feminists. Due to their well-organized and tireless efforts, or at least partially so, we women of the USA have the right to vote.

Once I met six Feminists and it was only then, at the age of 26, that I heard there was a fight between men and women. Later I discovered the Feminists, in their headlong rush for feminine equality, had denied there was any difference between the male and the female. And I mean any difference at all.

They carried this idea to extreme lengths, many of them going as far as to refuse to discover or enjoy the facts of life for themselves. This may explain a lot of private cry-

ing on their part. It is certainly what started the fight between them and the men they knew. Luckily it was an idea which didn't take with most people—so the race continued and even some of the feminists themselves forgot their principles long enough to bear children.

Today the little group of earnest thinkers who most closely follow the Feminists are now all-out for making women equal with men, not by denying there is a basic difference, but by having the Constitution changed to *say* women are equal with men. If they aren't careful, they may find the government of the USA giving in to them and then they'll be exactly where they are now only without any program to make speeches about.

This group is a menace to the Common Man and Woman because not only do they want to change the Constitution but they also wish to have all the laws repealed which give any special privileges to women—such as permitting them to sit down in factories when they aren't working, special work hours, or rules preventing women from hurting themselves lifting heavy objects.

It seems obvious to me that the Equal-Righters are in reality continuing the fight between the sexes, although on a new level. With the Feminists it was below the belt. Now it's right out in the open.

Anyone who does anything to stir up this kind of sex trouble is as bad as a Ku Klux Klanner. If a few women have actually gained any privileges as far as working conditions go, it is manifestly the business of all women to see

that similar privileges are handed out to the other sex as well.

It isn't any easier for some men to stand up all night than it is for some women. Women may get their delicate insides out of wack by lifting heavy weights—and men may get hernias. There is no reason, other than laboring for the overthrow of Fascism, for anyone to work more than six hours a day, five days a week, be that person a male or a female.

Instead of helping the Nation concentrate on getting equality and better working conditions for everyone, male and female, the Equal-Righters make a loud noise about removing special privileges for women. This is a sure-fire method of losing some of women's present better working conditions and making it harder to get them back for both sexes.

Equality is equality regardless of sex, color, nationality, or religion. The Equal-Righters will be helping to get equality for women only when they begin fighting for equality for *everyone*—man and woman.

It is the husbands of Equal-Righters who do most of the family crying.

The rise of the American middle class was made possible by the advance of the machine age. As more and more goods were produced more and more easily, profits from their sale overflowed from the hands of the former aristocracy into a wider circle, the middle class.

But the bulk of the middle class has understood quite well, for a long time, that it will never actually control anything terribly important like the government or Big Business. Control and most of the profits are for the Big Boys. The middle class is largely quite content to take the crumbs which fall from the big tables. There are sufficient of these crumbs to feed the middle class well, buy for them a car, a smallish but very adequate house, often a servant, and to allow them to save some money and invest it in Big Business.

The first middle class women were quite Common People. They must have been a fine group. They purchased all the mechanical household devices as fast as they appeared, taught their servants how to use them, installed their children in schools, and then looked about for something to do.

One of the things they found to do was set up Women's Clubs. Many of these clubs became real forces in the community. Their members worked to get better schools, parks, clean up slums, start free clinics. Some of the clubs organized themselves on a national basis and worked for legislation requiring such things as better working conditions for women, pure food and drug acts, government money for child and maternal health.

The children of the original middle class, and even the children's children, are now grown. Most of the males are struggling ceaselessly to earn a little more money so their wives may have two servants, and two cars, and their children may go to more expensive schools. The present middle class home is dominated by the wife who has, especially in what is known as the upper middle class, come to fancy herself as a Lady. Knowing her husband is in trade, and hence no Gentleman, she kicks him around plenty, always spending more money than he can quite earn. She often spurs Daddy on to greater economic effort by little showers of unexplained tears.

The majority of middle class women of today do not, as Mr. Wendell Willkie so fondly hopes, see the world as one world at all. They see the world as divided into classes—which is quite correct—and, knowing that they will never really belong to the upper class, since their husbands are unable to acquire the necessary money, they wish at least to make certain that no Common People come in and contaminate their class.

The fine organizations, the clubs which their mothers

built up, have come to be sororities with closely drawn membership lines. Their activities are resolutely circumscribed.

Some of the clubs have become little circles where middle class women eagerly reach out for the Culture which they fondly believe will make them Ladies. Any speaker who, for whatever price, dared tell these females the day of the Lady is done would be listened to with smiles—and not invited back.

The bibles of such cultural clubs are *Vogue* and *Harpers Bazaar*. The members read the society columns and know the names and doings of all the Rich Bitches whom they believe to be Ladies. The Bitches do not go in for community work or legislative action and neither do the members of the cultural clubs. They do a little basket-carrying at Thanksgiving and that is that.

Others of the clubs still work—and work hard—to improve the community; even to improve the state of the nation—or the World. Too often it seems easier to them to try and improve the world than just to get a park in their own town. The reasoning is simple: If you make speeches about improving the world, you get on the front page of the *New York Times*. If you make speeches about improving the Nation, you get on page 18. If you start trying to improve things in your own backyard, usually you don't make the papers at all.

Besides, it's rather delightful to talk about making a Better World—like wandering around in a fairy tale. Nobody expects you really to be specific about anything. If you go

after the City Council for a new park, they're almost certain to inquire exactly where the money is to come from to buy the land—and what land—and how do you *know* the children will use it—and *whose* children.

The majority of women in America are much more interested in improving their own backyards than in improving the Nation or the World. But the majority of Women's Clubs are not for the majority of American women. The Clubs are for "intelligent, educated" American women. The leaders of most of the clubs do not ask what the majority of American women think or feel or want. Most of the clubs do not even care what the other clubs think or feel or want. Whatever part of the universe they are trying to improve, they do not wish any help or advice from nonmembers.

Often the usefulness of their ultimate decisions to back some piece of legislation or further some good cause comes to nothing because it takes the Club directors so long to decide to suggest to their membership that they get going. The legislation or the cause is in the ash can by the time the members get around to thinking about it.

When an individual club, or National Association of clubs, does decide to get to work, the Directors often see the wisdom of trying to work together with other clubs and women's organizations. But it usually takes a year of hard work, inspecting the membership lists of another group, before even two can decide jointly to back some project. In times like these, this timidity, based on a desire to be sure your club is working with the "right people"—those in

your own social class—has the effect of pretty well stopping all cooperation.

There are, however, many members of women's clubs, and even a few whole clubs, who are far more interested in getting something done than in keeping their social status intact. So "Common" were the members of a New York City Branch of the Business and Professional Woman's Club that they declared they would withdraw their branch from the club if the directors continued in their attitude that Negro women could not be admitted. The Directors gave in, more power to them. They said it was just a mix-up —they hadn't meant to say Negroes couldn't join.

I spoke, when the Japanese were taking Kiska, to a Woman's Club in a small city near New York. It was an industrial city and a war boom town, trailer camps with kids crawling in the mud around them and all that. I was talking about special wartime child care. There were not more than four out of a couple of hundred women who had considered the problem. You might have thought it was 1938.

After the session, the girl who'd asked me to speak took me to the train and I asked her when she thought those women would wake up.

"When the last maid has left to go to a war plant," she said.

As their last servant leaves, will they wake up? Will they then merely become oratorical on the subject of a better world or will they become part of the world?

Oh, Mr. Willkie! It is a fine thing for you to travel the

world in an airplane and to see we must have one world or no decent world. It's an important thing to write about.

But, for the love of the United States, Mr. Willkie, can't you travel this country on a bicycle and write another book which will hit nearer home? It makes me nervous when people like you pin all their fine exhortations on unity of the world. It's so much easier to embrace the world than to love your next door neighbor!

One night, Mr. Willkie, when I was working in Plant Seven, I got into a bus to go to New Jersey to see about something at the local union office. In the bus was a little Woman's Club—a group of women who, I gathered from the conversation as we rode, met once a month to go into New York to the theatre. It wasn't as nice for them to have to go in the bus as it had been when they had gas for their cars but they'd had a good time—seen a good matinee, had a cocktail and some dinner—and now they were settled in the bus for the trip home.

They had husbands and homes and children and they still had servants. To me, Mr. Willkie, they were the heart and soul of the middle class, the status quo.

I got into the bus in my overalls, with my defense workers badge pinned on the edge of my collar. And as I walked down the bus toward them, toward the only empty seat, which was near them, they stopped talking. They stared at me. They sighed.

When I sat down, one of them pulled herself together and said, "WELL! A *defense* worker!" She laughed. "If

we aren't careful," she said loudly and clearly, "we'll soon have to be hanging out our own laundry."

That, Mr. Willkie, seemed to me the kind of remark expressive of the kind of feeling which has got to be finished off here at home before there is any sense in your talk of One World. This was the disgusting, snobbish point of view that has set one class in the USA against another, that has prevented unity at home and, hence, unity in the world.

I hated those women, Mr. Willkie. In the name of every worker of the USA, I hated them. I felt at that moment like knocking them off their well-girdled backsides onto the floor. But it wouldn't have done any good and besides, little actions like that end in class riots—in race riots.

I'm sure the Clubwomen of America don't want to foment riots. And I believe that when the last servant does leave, even many of the most backward of Clubwomen will join up with other women to solve the basic problems of our immediate existence.

Husbands of most Clubwomen go on fishing trips as often as possible. They refer to their wives collectively as "the girls," singly as "the little woman" or "your mother." They were taught by their mothers that women are wonderful, woman's place is in the home, and you wouldn't want your wife to work. Most of these husbands neither know nor care what their wives are doing. They are usually not allowed to know or care what their children are doing. It would be a good and fruitful thing if these husbands sat down quietly and analysed their family lives from the point of view of how much satisfaction they and their wives

and their children are really getting out of the situation.

If we are going to continue having any homes at all, discussion of the collective security of our own children, homes, and husbands will have, for a while, to replace discourses on One World. And even the editor of the *New York Times* may give front page space to these discussions —when his last servant has left.

Females have been engaged in business for years and years and a number of them have been "successful." Success might be put at $3,600 a year, since less than 10% of all families in the USA have ever had that kind of annual income.

The successful business female, like the male of the same species, was bred to the idea of individual enterprise. That is what built up our great country in the past century and today many people go blindly forward toward success in the honest, or dishonest, belief that we are still living in the past.

Leaders of the National Association of Manufacturers

(who obviously aren't too bright or they wouldn't constantly be messing up their public relations) are continually making speeches to the effect that if anything happens to individual enterprise in the USA, the country will fold. This idea is presented almost daily in the national press and over the radio networks and deeply implanted in the minds of vast numbers of people. The "successes" are thus constantly strengthened in their beliefs.

The psychology of the person who is "successful" is normally that of the Lone Wolf—wholly individual. If at times the Wolves gather in packs, it is not that they feel less individual but merely that they see each individual can get more if he hunts in a pack.

The She-Wolves are just as ruthless as the He-Wolves, of course, else they would not have gotten to first base. This is a group of females I understand all too well—having been one myself.

My enterprise of custom-made dressmaking was in essence conducted as is any other business of our day. The people who actually made the clothes were paid the minimum to keep them housed, clothed, and fed. Those who sold the clothes had established different standards for themselves so they received more. And the boss took the rest. I was the boss.

Most She-Wolves are not in such a happy position as was I. They work for big companies, or for the State or Federal Government, and their salaries are determined by their bosses. It is expedient that they guard their jobs carefully and see to it that other She-Wolves do not get too near

them or have too much chance to show the bosses how good they are. Many She-Wolves would be just as disgusting as the Rich Bitches except that they actually contribute something to society in return for economic independence.

She-Wolves use any means at their disposal to hold onto and build up their economic independence. If it is easier to get to be a vice-president by going to bed with the boss instead of by any other type of work, they do so.

The She-Wolves trade on their femininity whenever it suits their purpose. They know all the tricks from uplift brassieres to tears. Helplessness in certain circumstances eases their paths. For example, one day I went to lunch with a big business She-Wolf. We were to join someone and she forgot to get her secretary to write down the exact address. So we stopped in a hotel for the purpose of calling her office. She stepped into a telephone booth—and then she stepped out again.

"Oh, Elizabeth," she said, "would you mind calling for me? I don't know how to dial the number." This was at least a decade after the installation of the dial system in the City of New York.

There's one extremely successful woman who owns her own business and has made millions. She sometimes goes in person to buy little do-dads for her shops. She is small and has always made a habit of using baby talk.

I complained about this custom one day to a man who worked for her, asking whether she hadn't ever had time to learn to speak English. She couldn't be dumb, I added.

"Dumb!" he snorted. "She sits there looking at gadgets boxed by the dozen and says, 'How much is thith tute little thin?' So someone starts figuring out the price, per gadget. What she is doing meanwhile is hastily calculating in her head what she will finally offer per gross."

Whatever their behavior, and however they have seen fit to drag boudoir behavior into the office, the She-Wolves have served a purpose over and above getting a lot of wares which women want (or believe they want) onto the market. She-Wolves have proven that women have the ability to function in executive jobs.

The She-Wolves have been confused by being female. Many of the early She-Wolves, such as the two I spoke of above who are 50 or over, lost out to a large extent on the traditional feminine side of their lives. But by the time my generation of She-Wolves, and the generation after me, came along, things were somewhat easier for us. The anti-woman-in-business ice had been broken and there was time for trying to work things out more smoothly.

My contemporaries in She-Wolfery were educated from childhood with the idea we would earn our livings—and be good at it. Few in my generation had any struggle to get loose from our families. We came mostly from the middle class and had our education or background been slightly different, we would have ended up as Gentlewomen or Clubwomen. We were not pushed by economic circumstance into earning our own livings. We chose to.

Our goal was to be economically independent—always —by dint of our own labor. We didn't band together or

form organizations to help ourselves. We worked entirely as individuals. We did evolve a kind of philosophy, upon which we agreed I think, as far as the rest of our lives went. We did not take the position of the early feminists that there was no difference between men and women. We acknowledged there was just the one basic difference—below the belt. And we were glad of it.

It was always our belief that only economically independent women could meet men, love them, and marry them, with any degree of honesty in the arrangement. From the start we all intended to have our work and everything else too—husbands, children, homes, the works.

None of us said or thought that her work was, or ever would be, more important to her than the rest of her life. And doubtless we all had to go through what we did in order to donate the results to the world, and to break down a few more prejudices.

A large number of She-Wolves do manage to have their work, get married, have homes, have children, and still not quite collapse under the strain. So far, I belong in this group. There isn't a female in it who doesn't fight, day and night, to keep going. It was only the comparative ease with which we could hire servants which prevented us from seeing long ago how ridiculous it is to attempt running a house along eighteenth century lines while being a modern woman.

We believe that women have the right and duty to be productive in the world. We know we can produce children and still produce other things. We know that the children

of working mothers can be as well and perhaps better brought up than those of non-working mothers. We do not consider any marriage can work out as a fine human relationship unless both parties to it are free to take it or leave it, after due consideration of the issues involved in any proposed split up, and with due consideration for any children.

Although I personally subscribe to all these She-Wolf principles, I do not wish to argue the point of whether or not it is the *duty* of every female to be economically independent by dint of producing something socially useful in addition to children. Nor would I argue that a marriage in which the wife is economically dependent on the husband can never succeed.

But I certainly do argue that it is the *right* of every female to have an opportunity to exercise her full capacities if she wants to do so. It is her right to be socially productive in addition to child bearing and to work outside her home and to be economically independent if she wishes.

I am one hundred per cent sold on the idea that no female, economically dependent or independent, can ever become a woman—an adult female person—as long as she cannot freely and fully exercise these rights. Bound by household tasks, she is not free to do so.

We will never grow up as long as we must devote the major part of our time or a great amount of our individual energy being servants for our husbands and children. And we will never grow up as long as we try to free ourselves at the expense of making someone else a servant.

We She-Wolves are successful in business. But still we cry—as the Forgotten Females and the Club Women cry —and largely for the same reasons.

The husbands of a lot of She-Wolves can't stand the strain of having their wives fight day and night to keep going inside and outside the home—so there are divorces. But on the other hand, the husbands of many She-Wolves, especially the younger ones, are really incredible if you consider them in relation to the average male today.

These husbands are as capable as their wives of taking care of the baby from the day it gets home from the hospital. Pop even takes the infant away for weekends quite unaided. These men can usually cook and do, although they prefer child care to other housekeeping.

There is a wonderful relationship between the fathers and children of She-Wolves, something which suggests the possibility of a far sounder family relationship all the way round if the majority of women could really share the responsibilities of child care with their husbands.

Men like and dislike She-Wolves for the same reason: because they are economically independent. If the home life could be run smoothly, the economic independence would be all gravy!

One of the reasons I cry is because, in our day, this category of females is divided into many parts! These are the women, the hundreds and thousands and now millions of women, who work regularly outside their homes for less than $3,600 a year. By this fact they are bound together. Their problem—of how to work and still have homes and happy children and husbands—is the most acute of any group in the country. It is a problem shared by all of them.

Womenworkers are more forgotten than the Forgotten Females. No one even tells them they are Noble for being Mothers. They are never thanked publicly for anything they do (exceept occasionally in wartime and then not very loudly). They just do—the laundry, the typing, the welding, the serving, the teaching, the nursing. They get the telephone number, file the papers, and clean the house.

In my character as a She-Wolf, an experimenter in female economic independence well rewarded with cash, as a mother wolf and wolf-wife, I bow humbly before the

women in this group who have kept their jobs, done their work well, had their homes, children and husbands, even as I. All this most of them have accomplished without ever having seen a trained baby nurse, a nursery school or camp, an after-school program, a cook, a laundress, much less a chamber maid. I bow before these women—but I am here to say that the way they have to live is no good for them or their children or their husbands or their bosses. And they know it.

There are thousands of Womenworkers who have earned their $3,600 a year or less and, because of earning it, have not had any kind of home of their own, no husbands and no children. Theirs are probably the most understandable tears of our day.

Among the Womenworkers are most of the Professional females. They are often placed by society in a group apart. They are not supposed to engage in community work outside their profession, least of all if such work is political. Many of them who have joined in struggles for better education or better medical care or better anything for the Common People have been blacklisted and thrown out of their jobs.

A large number of Professional females, like their male counterparts, have gained what little security they have, financial success, and even the possibility of doing their particular work, by playing up to the money and power of the most conservative people in the country—those who have their day and intend to keep it. These Professional females have the same problems as other Womenworkers

who earn less than $3,600 a year. But they *feel* like different people—with special problems of their own.

The Professional female who is a Womanworker does not usually think herself anything like the secretary who ushers her into the office of the Philanthropist who may make it possible for the Professional to continue her researches for another year. Nor does the secretary feel she's much like the Professional—although most of the time secretaries and all other kinds of female white-collar workers are extremely professional at their jobs.

When She-Wolves or male bosses discuss low paid White-Collar workers, the talk is invariably of clothes. Instead of wondering how Marjorie feels about filing or typing or being charming at a reception desk, Margie's employers invariably discuss her red fingernails, high heels, and satin dresses.

It's true many Margies wear red fingernails and French heels—but practically none of them wears satin dresses to work any more. I imagine it was the advent of the She-Wolves which caused all this violent criticism of what the Margies wear to work. I doubt seriously if business was impeded by the fact Margie wore a satin dress while taking dictation from her male boss in 1925. The She-Wolves are quite right that a satin dress is not exactly a functional garment for office work. It rumples and wears out fast. But that's not why all the fuss about what's correct clothing for an office worker came to be her primary problem. The She-Wolves didn't want any competition for the males around

the place, and that goes for red fingernails and high heels as well as satin dresses.

After a decade or so of worrying about the White-Collar girl's work clothes, it has become quite a simple matter to keep the conversation concerning these womenworkers on sartorial matters and ignore the basic fact that most White Collar girls are terribly underpaid in relation to what they do. Business couldn't go on without them—so they are told to dress well (on $25 a week). As a result of this, White Collar girls appeal for raises because they can't afford the right clothes on their present salaries! The whole psychology of the female White Collar worker is wrapped in clothes-consciousness. That she manages to get her work done so efficiently in spite of it is a miracle.

It is not odd under the circumstances that Miss White Collar hasn't come to think of herself as a Professional and demand, at the very least, recognition for her talents, even if she still does try to scrape along on as low a salary as that of her Professional sisters. Nor is it strange that Miss White Collar has never paused to consider that she and the Womanworker who made the dress Miss White Collar wears are economically, basically, in the same position.

Miss Garment Worker should thank her lucky stars she isn't required by society to spend half her leisure time trying to figure out what are the right work clothes for her, and to spend half her salary buying them.

Miss Garment Worker and her sisters, Miss Welder, Miss Electrical Worker, et al, often exhibit the same irritating female traits in their shops as do the Professional

females and the Misses White Collars in their offices. All of them have a tendency to cry when criticised. They're all sisters under their permanents.

Many of them become confused as to whether they are at work in order to get a man or do their jobs. But at least Miss Garment Worker is not generally confused by the social questions of whether she is a Lady and never bothered about what kind of neckline her boss prefers her to wear at the sewing machine. That leaves her the freest of the Workingwomen to consider the main problems of her life and make efforts, sometimes very unladylike efforts, to improve her wages so she can live better.

Of course every one of these females, working for under $3,600 a year, is faced with exactly the same problems. How much goes for rent? How much for food? How much for clothes? Shall I get married and be a housewife or cling to my solitary independent state? Can my husband and I afford my giving up my job to have a baby? If I am sick, who will take care of the kids? If prices go up, how can I get back to work and stay there if we have kids? Have I the strength to buy food for dinner on my way home from work? Shall I clean the house today—or can I put it off? These are the basic problems which face *every* Womanworker.

Some Womenworkers have begun cooperating to solve the problems which arise in their work. There is a Union of United Office and Professional Workers. There is a Book and Magazine Guild, a Hotel and Club Employees Union, a Teachers Union. Women who work in any trade

where men work—from laundry and cleaning to welding and weaving to typing and teaching and writing—some of the women in all trades belong to Unions where, with the men, they try to improve the conditions of their work.

But the men in the Unions have not yet come to look upon the problems surrounding the American Home as problems which touch every male and female member of every union. The Unions were founded by men and are still largely controlled by men. It is very rare to find a female leader in any union. In wartime, problems pertaining to child care have come to the attention of the male union leaders—and this has been an opening wedge for such Womenworkers as are organized to get themselves a little help with their homely problems.

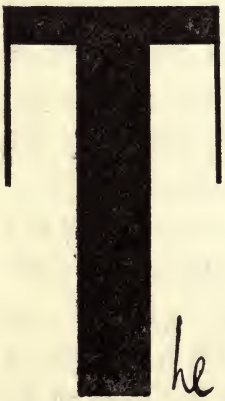
However the majority of Womenworkers are not in Unions. They haven't stopped to think, any more than the She-Wolves stopped to think, that there's no necessity for just going on and on at home doing the same old things in the same old way. They have not stopped even to realize that every one of them is faced by the same problems day after day, year in year out—and that just facing the problems isn't getting anyone any nearer the good life. They have not said firmly to themselves that their problems are the same as those of millions of other women who don't work.

The females who have certainly got the worst deal in the USA and whose husbands and whose Government do not appear to recognize that women are doing two jobs—even these Womenworkers, millions strong, have not yet

set about in organized fashion to demand what is necessary to modernize—and prevent the collapse of—the American Home.

Most Womenworkers do not realize what can be done. They have gone into factories and said: "Why do you do this like this? I could work five times as fast if I did it this way!" The men have gaped and said: "Well, we just always did it this way." A new eye looking at an old job sees clearly how to improve the job. The Womenworkers have been able to improve many shops.

If the Menworkers could just take over the American Home for a couple of months, believe me, the dishpans and diapers would disappear! But husbands of Womenworkers are worrying most of the time about not being able to earn enough money so the Womanworker can stay home and really keep house. They don't yet see that's not the path to a happy home.



The Common Woman

I do not enjoy sticking out my neck to define the Common Woman when Mr. Wallace, to my knowledge, has

never defined the Common Man—and he started this kind of talk. But because the word Common had quite a disagreeable connotation in the pre-Wallace days, I feel the phrase needs clarification.

Pre-Wallace, if anyone said a person was common, it generally meant in the dictionary sense of being "below the ordinary standards; second rate." And where I use common in this book in that sense, I spell it with a small c.

The first meaning of Common in my dictionary is "belonging or pertaining to the community at large." But as all men and all women technically belong to the community at large, I do not feel this is a very definitive definition of the Common Man or Woman. Obviously, there are people in every category I have described who do not *feel* they belong to the community.

Strictly speaking, I guess it would be fair to say that a Common Man or a Common Woman is one who *feels* he or she belongs to the community—for better or worse, in sickness or in health, for richer, for poorer, until death do us part.

It seems to me that in this day and age a Common Woman is best identified by the fact that neither through her own efforts or those of her husband does she ever have enough money to arrange life so she can have a real vacation each year of more than two weeks. Only if she is working and single does she ever get even those two weeks —and then she can seldom do just as she wants because it would cost too much money.

By real vacation, I mean not having to do a single thing

one doesn't want to do, whether it's cooking, or cleaning, or child care, or finding your husband's cuff links, or being polite to someone who bores or irritates you, or eating at a certain hour, or sleeping at a certain hour, or getting dressed up, or not having a reason to get dressed up. I mean, in essence, a period of real freedom.

Kindly note that it is MONEY which endlessly prevents the Common Woman from having such a vacation. This holds true for many Forgotten Females, Gentle and Not-So-Gentlewomen, Equal Righters, Clubwomen, and Womenworkers—any of whom may be Common Women. In all these categories there are females who never have enough money to have a real vacation. These are the females who should most willingly band together to make certain that they have the opportunity to exercise their rights as human beings fully; to be socially productive outside their homes if they wish; to take their places as part of the community which is not encompassed by four walls.

The Forgotten Females, Clubwomen, and Womenworkers comprise the vast majority of females in the country. All are faced with identical problems regarding the running of their homes.

Among the Forgotten Females there are some who are sunk into the dishpan so far, they cannot raise their eyes above its level. But most of them are peering over the edge and a lot of them have their heads all the way out of the kitchen. Millions of Forgotten Females want desperately to get the American Home reorganized, to *be* as well as *feel* themselves part of the Community.

Among the Clubwomen there are many snobs who care more about keeping their one servant than about anything else in the world. There are thousands of other Clubwomen who are neither snobs nor completely occupied with making over the World. They want desperately to get the American Home reorganized and to be a part of the Community to which they feel they belong.

Among the Womenworkers there are many millions who want to be able to do a good job both inside and outside of the home.

Will the Common Women, the women who feel themselves a part of the community, work together to enable themselves to really function in that community? Will the Common Men work with them?

One thing which makes people work together is necessity. It is necessary that the USA be populated by men and women—adult male and female persons.

Adults are those who have attained full size and

strength. Adults are capable of running themselves, their homes, their jobs, their country, in such a way as to assure the fullest satisfaction possible for all concerned. Adults can work with one another.

I have used the word woman a good deal thus far in this book simply because I didn't want to wound anyone's feelings. Maybe you've been slightly irritated by my speaking of females.

But you wouldn't have wanted me to start right out saying that, by definition, there are practically no women in the USA, would you?

There are practically no American females who have acquired full size and strength. It obviously isn't possible for anyone to acquire full size and strength if she can only function within the four walls of one house. Nobody would expect even a dog to acquire full strength that way.

Nobody would expect a dog who was constantly attached to his house by a cord to become very strong—or never to whimper. Ninety-nine percent of American females over 21 are either locked in their houses or tied to them by a strong rope, the other end of which rests in the hands of a child, husband, or servant. Anyone of these three can get the female back into the house anytime by just yanking hard enough.

At this moment the running of the home and the welfare of those who live in it are the female's primary responsibility. It is quite possible and practical to arrange ways and means of carrying that responsibility without

being rudely interrupted in other work. But the ways and means have not yet been put into common practice.

Therefore ninety-nine percent of American females over twenty-one years of age cannot attain their full strength. Therefore we are not adult. Therefore we are not women. We are wenches.

Wenches are girls, damsels, maidens, maid-servants, or strumpets. There's nothing *wrong* with never attaining your full growth. At least, there's nothing morally wrong. And a wench is not necessarily a strumpet. Lots of wenches are pretty nice people.

But personally I'm absolutely sick of being a wench and so are millions of other females. And I should think millions of men must be sick of having wenches in their homes and offices and shops—even when those wenches don't cry! It is a very moot question whether males can attain their full size and strength if they must lead their lives side by side with partially developed females.

Surely the world would be more fun and work much better if the female, like the male, could really get out of the home into the community. There she could get enough air and exercise to gain her full size and strength. Then she could cease crying and be a woman.

One reason women cry is because they aren't women at all. They are wenches. There are a good many things which make wenches cry which are enough to make strong men and women cry. There is a category of people, often mentioned by the United States Employment Service and the War Manpower Commission, known as "Women, Negroes,

and National Minority Groups." These people have seldom had a break as far as being able to get good jobs goes. Adults may well weep until this situation is corrected.

One result of the process which will turn wenches into women will be to help turn that whole category "Women, Negroes, and National Minority Groups" into American citizens.

Part 2 Wenches with Wrenches

I [Elizabeth Hawes, erstwhile designer of fabulously expensive clothes for rich women] did not go to work in an airplane engine factory because I thought the most useful thing I could do in wartime was to work in a machine shop. Three conversations which took place after the United States had been at war for a year sent me into a war plant.

One was with a woman who worked for the Warman-power Commission in Washington. I had been collecting material for an article on the registration of women for war work. I'd been in Detroit, Hartford, and Baltimore, three places where registrations had been pushed.

In one place I picked up a speakers' manual which summed up all the objections to women working which the recruiters were to be prepared to answer. One of the items said that men were saying: "If my wife goes to work, who is going to do the laundry? Who is going to cook? Who is going to clean?"

The answer given in the manual was: "The men are un-

patriotic. They must be made to see that the women are needed in industry and therefore must go in."

I went to Washington for a final check-up before writing my piece. It was generally conceded by everyone that women were not going into war industry at the rate they were needed. For the last time I put my question, the one I'd been asking everywhere: "Why aren't the women going into war industry?"

The woman to whom I put the question this time was supposedly an authority. She said, "The women are unpatriotic."

"What about the laundry and the cleaning and the cooking and the children?" I asked.

"It is too difficult to solve those problems," she said. "They haven't even done it in England. We are going to put on a Patriotic Campaign."

"Why are the women who are working now doing it?" I asked.

"Well, as far as we can make out, they're just doing it for the money! What do *you* think?"

I could have given her an hour speech on the patriotism of thousands of women I'd seen in my children's committee work who couldn't take jobs for lack of child care facilities. But to this last remark, one I'd heard from authorities everywhere and always given in the same sneering tone, I had no ready answer. I felt anything I said could be met with the response that very possibly I didn't know what I was talking about. I'd never been in a war plant.

The second conversation was held jointly over a lunch

table by an important Trade Union leader, two of the Union leader's aides, Kathryn Hill who was executive chairman of the Committee for the Care of Young Children in Wartime, and myself.

Kathryn and I had been making our usual speech about how very important it was for the unions to do more than just pass resolutions on the child care problem. It's a union problem, we kept saying. It's the children of working women who need care.

It was not that this union leader or any I have ever met was averse to child care. But during the year in which we "intellectuals" or "White Collar workers" had been so assiduously prodding the union chiefs, it had become perfectly obvious that most of them had always regarded child care as a purely female problem. As there are so few women in important positions in unions, there were almost no females around the main union offices to whom the problem could be turned over. The few available were busy, to put it euphemistically.

As we were more and more thwarted by the inertia or sabotage with which child care programs were everywhere met, we became more and more outspoken with the male union officials. And innumerable times we intellectuals resorted to telling them that if they had any sense, they'd pick up the child care program as a means of organizing women.

If there is one tactical error an intellectual can make, it's to gratuitously offer advice on organizing to a labor leader. They have one effective way of smacking you down.

"You have never worked at Union organizing," they always answered, correctly.

The luncheon produced many concrete suggestions as to what the unions could do—made by the union leader and aides present entirely to one another—and solely concerning union activity. Toward the end of the lunch, the union leader looked up at Kathryn and me and said, "And when we really get going on this thing, I suppose you'll get out?" It was quite unnecessary for him to add the other half of the remark which would have been: "because you don't understand anything about organizing"—or "labor"—or "mass production"—or, he might even have said, "the Common Man."

"Damn it!" I thought. "If I have to have it explained to me once more that I don't know anything about the workers, I'll go mad. Can they be such strange and mysterious people that nobody but themselves will ever understand them?"

The third conversation which helped shove me into a plant came after many remarks from friends who insisted that I was a clothes designer and ought to be functioning as such. I always said I'd rather design clothes than do anything else—but the times were not right. Clothes didn't matter.

Then out of the blue, a friend in the department store world called me in and said, "There's something all wrong with the women's work clothes. Nobody seems to know what it is. Whatever the companies suggest, the women hate. Instead of buying what is offered, they go shopping in

army and navy stores. You find out what it is they want and then we'll get it and sell it to them."

This was about the only clothing problem which could have caught my fancy at that moment.

When I used to design beguiling dinner dresses for ladies or Riches Bitches to trail around in, I knew exactly what I was doing, having gone all through the act myself. But how could I stick my fingers into the workclothes business when I didn't know anything about "workers"? I didn't know for sure whether they were patriotic or unpatriotic. I didn't know whether they thought they needed child care and housekeeping help—or whether it was just that I thought they did. I didn't know whether they loved their men or shoved them around like most other women. I didn't know whether as workers they developed the characteristics of the She-Wolf or some other characteristics. I didn't know whether they laughed or cried at their work.

So everything I'd ever been interested in, from child care to clothes, landed me up against the factory gate. When I had started to fall out of the Ivory Tower of my grey-stone dressmaking establishment I'd landed on the first floor balcony where I could see and hear what was going on in the big world—but wasn't really a part of it. The time appeared to have come to complete the fall, to try and land on the sidewalk on my feet.

The week men were told for the first time to transfer to essential work or else, I went to the United States Employment Service in New York to get a defense job. I was told they weren't registering any unskilled women for war work.

So, having phoned the well-publicized Sperry Gyroscope and been told they didn't think they were hiring any unskilled women, I repaired to the employment office of the Wright Aeronautical Corporation in Paterson, New Jersey, adjacent to my old home town of Ridgewood. I thought if I couldn't get in there any other way, I'd manage it by wire pulling.

Carefully filling out the application blank under my married name of Losey, not wishing my family name or somewhat publicized past to catch up with me, I was ultimately sent into the office of a man who rose to his feet and with a hearty voice inquired: "Aren't you Henrietta Hawes' daughter, the one who sometimes got her name in the papers?" I said yes. After all, in accounting for my previous

work, I'd had to mention a firm called Hawes Inc. and that I ran it.

The man immediately asked me if I were only five feet two, as I had sworn, and I said yes, I thought so. He measured me and found me to be five feet three—a matter about which he said Wright's was very particular. Having settled that, I was physically examined (without anyone discovering I had a slight hernia in my appendicitis scar) finger printed, pictured, and directed to go to a trade school at my own expense for two weeks. If Wright's were not then ready to take me on, I'd be kept at school but put on the payroll at 60 cents an hour.

During the physical exam, a lady asked me to try on a pair of blue slacks. "Wright's give you your first set of work clothes," she said, "and we want them to fit."

"How much for the second set?" I asked.

"Five seventy-five," said she.

"Can't I wear overalls?" I asked.

"These are what we give you," she said.

"I can buy work clothes cheaper than that," I responded.

She just glared at me and said Wright's wasn't making any money on the clothes. Hastily pulling myself together and remembering I was now one of the Common People and better keep my mouth shut or I might be put down as undesirable, I smiled sweetly and we both relaxed.

I departed with two thoughts, that there was something that should be done about the price of work clothes and that anyone who didn't have both arms broken could be

hired for war work, even near New York City where grass grows on the streets.

At the Trade School there were more men than gals and Wright's took all the men into the plant after two weeks, leaving us wenches to languish on the payroll. Also, the instructors tried to teach the men more about the machines than they did the gals. As the machines in the school were mere toys, this didn't matter much.

We wenches were admonished by one instructor that women have no place in a machine shop—and another instructor busied himself persuading the females they would lose their femininity if they wore slacks. By the time we were told to report to the plant, all but two of the wenches in the class were stalking about the machines in high heels, silk stockings, knitted fascinators, and little bows in their hair. I decided then that anything the management chose to prescribe and enforce in the way of work clothes, at any price, was what most wenches had coming to them.

There were things one could learn in school, and people from other schools afterward told me they were glad they'd gone to school, but all of my class agreed we learned practically nothing. After a few days, I was put to doing what I called "making square screws." Actually I was making the round tops of bolts into square tops. Round or square, someone was getting screwed by my work, since I figured it out, after I was on the payroll, that at 60 cents an hour, with my milling machine set at the speed of a snail, it was costing X exactly $2.40 for each round top I squared off. Whether X was Mr. J. P. Morgan, who had endowed the

school, or Wright's or the tax payers, I never did figure out.

We all thought we'd be paid at the end of our third week in school, but it developed Wright's, like all large organizations, are always a week behind with the payroll because it's so huge and complicated, they can't make it out overnight. It didn't matter to me as I had some income stacked up and a working husband—but there were major hysterics in the ladies' room on the part of many of the girls who had borrowed the money to tide them over two weeks at school and now hadn't a cent left for carfare, let alone for room rent, or food. I wonder why women cry all the time?

Nobody had told us we wouldn't get any money until the end of the fourth week of it all—the time we were about to go to the plant. Small things like that began to sprout the suspicion that the management of big industry is not too concerned with the worker's welfare.

Incidentally, when Wright's did send some one to school to pay us, there was no check for E. Losey. The head of the school was hovering around with a man from Wright's who obviously was clutching a check in his hot little fist. After everyone else was paid and gone, I said, "That's a check made out to Elizabeth Hawes."

Everyone looked rather amazed. "It's just that the man who hired me knows me as Hawes," I said. "That's the name I usually work under."

The head of the school said he knew I was the girl who had been doing the work (at $2.40 per screw), so they gave me the check and I asked them to please straighten it

out. "My name is Losey," I kept telling them. It developed later they had other ideas.

Every one of us girls in my class asked for the third shift —the one that works from midnight to eight A.M. We figured we could arrange the rest of our lives better by working that shift than any other. Two out of twelve of us had children, one being me.

This is the way I planned everything before I went into the plant. I had a son—Gavrik—age five. He went to a nursery school which opened at 8:45 and closed at 3 P.M. —but had an after school session for the children of working mothers which went until 6 P.M. My husband and myself completed the family.

At Christmas time in 1942, when our Negro man—our "servant" who took care of everything, including Gavrik —went into the Navy, we were all heartbroken. But it wouldn't have mattered if he hadn't gone that way because when I saw how things were at Wright's, I should certainly have sent him to get a job there. He wasn't like a servant

to us, and we didn't mind having him help with Gavrik. He was intelligent, a trained office worker out of luck because of his color.

When he left, I thought I couldn't bear to trust Gavrik's well-being to the average kind of person I could hire in wartime for what I could afford. I finally got a nursery school teacher to live in our house. She got G. up, made his breakfast, took him to school, and occasionally brought him home again. Usually he stayed at school until I could get him. The gal took him half a day Saturday when there was no school so I could get some sleep. Sundays my husband and I had him with us. We employed a part-time servant who cleaned the house and washed the dishes.

In addition to getting Gavrik from school three or four days a week, making his supper and putting him to bed, I had to do the food buying. This I had done very efficiently for months by taking two baskets to the public market at First Avenue and 10th Street in New York City and purchasing absolutely everything for the week on one trip, except milk and bread. I took taxis straight across town both ways, and still saved about twenty per cent on what our food bill would have been had I shopped in the neighborhood charge-it stores. It took me a total of about three hours to get all the food for a week and store it all away in our big ice box.

I shopped every Friday morning after I went into the plant, snatched about four hours sleep before getting G from school, preparing our dinner and packing myself off to work. I found I could hold out during the eight hours of

work from midnight Friday to eight Saturday morning on the four hours sleep and the strength of the knowledge that Saturday night was my night off.

Other days I would sleep from about ten A.M. to five P.M. My schedule turned out to be about as good as any I could have made without a staff of servants at my disposal and allowing I ever wanted to see my husband. In actuality I certainly didn't average over 6 hours sleep a day—which isn't quite enough for me but which had to suffice.

The reason I, like most working Mothers, wanted the third shift was because there was no provision on the schedule for anyone but me to take care of G in the daytime if he got sick and couldn't go to school. I knew that in such an emergency I could give up my sleep and catch up sometime, somehow.

Came the Monday night then when, stubbornly attired in my overalls even though I understood I would have to change them for a Wright uniform, I picked up my lunch box at ten-thirty and told my husband I was off. I was to be picked up at the George Washington Bridge by a school girl friend who had a male friend who had a car and could take more "riders."

Suddenly my husband did a very odd thing. He said, "Don't you want me to go up to the bridge with you—the first time?"

"Why, JOE," I scoffed, "I'm not SCARED!"

"It's those hold-ups," he said. "Maybe it will be dark up by the bridge."

"I've been half over the world by myself," I said. "What

could they take but my lunchbox?" He grudgingly said okay.

It turned out to be very exciting, waiting at the bridge for my car; seeing dozens of other cars pick up men in old pants, little jackets and pleasantly dilapidated caps, and start away into the gloom toward the Jersey side of the Hudson river. It was the first time I had ever had a feeling I was part of the war—a feeling which rapidly disappeared almost the instant I walked into the plant.

The plant was in reality a world of its own. And each little section of each department was a separate little town —its population devoted to using one special kind of machine to do one particular type of work on one or more parts of an airplane engine.

It was a huge place, this Wright Plant Seven. We were told it was the biggest airplane engine plant in the world. I measured its size by the fact that after one futile attempt to get across it in fifteen minutes to see the girl who had brought me to work, I gave up and realized she and the auto ride were lost to me forever. Our sections and departments flowed endlessly into and out of one another—divided only by streets along which tooted little trucks. Around the machine-blinded corners, people on bicycles shot out at you. Each department centered around a cluster of little wooden buildings housing the foreman and subforeman, as well as the cribs where some of the tools we needed for work were stored. Does crib mean storehouse? I guess so. Corn crib—baby crib—tool crib.

Way up above the rows and rows of every-sized ma-

chines, eternal lines of long blue lights shone down on us and our work. There were no windows and I became so used to the fact that the rows of machines and blue lights were the world that when I looked down a "street" once about 5 A.M. and saw a huge oblong cut out of the wall with sand, some cars, and sun in it, I thought someone must have put up a mural. It was just that they'd opened a door to let in a truck, and in with it came a glimpse of the world I'd left.

The first person encountered at Plant Seven was a lady counsellor. I use the word lady advisedly. The counsellors were all extremely well-groomed females, who gave off the aura of a fashion magazine's dream of a woman business executive. They were very kind and either hung around the locker room, talking interestedly to the female machinists or walking all over the plant making sure we were happy.

I asked an old worker the first night what the counsellors were there for and she said, "To wake us up if we sleep too long in the locker room." That turned out to be a thoroughly libelous statement—although partially true. I later discovered they served one extremely important function in addition to lending a kind of YWCA atmosphere to our plant lives.

The counsellors guided us to our departments the first night, after we had been given our uniforms and badges with pictures, department and pay-check numbers.

Helene, also a working mother, and I were put into the same section of a department which did every kind of thing to make a gear. Our job was grinding the outsides of

the gears on what are known as OD grinders. Adjacent to us was a section which did the inside grinding—on ID grinders. OD and ID stand for Outside and Inside Diameter respectively.

We polished off the long, round parts of the gears and also the flat surfaces of the flanges. A gear is apt to look quite like a candlestick in its early stages. You later discover that most of the stick part is there merely so you can hold the piece in your machine and gets cut off in the end.

Our foreman and sub-foreman gave us a little lecture in one of the wooden shacks when we arrived. We were to get to our machines promptly at 11:40 every night, do our work, eat our "lunch" by our machines but not gather in groups since the management was letting the third shift eat on company time. A wagon with food would come around about three A.M. At 3:50 A.M. every morning we would have a fifteen minute rest period when we could gather as and where we chose. We could go downstairs at 7:30 A.M. giving us time to change our clothes before we punched out on the time clock at 7:40. We could smoke anywhere in the basement which housed the locker rooms and time clocks.

The foreman was a little grim and tired. He looked at us rather side-wise. The subforeman seemed more cheery. He took us out into the machine maze and introduced us to Steve, our leadman and immediate superior, a stocky, bright-eyed, Italian boy of twenty-four.

"This is Steve," said Jake, the subforeman.

"What's your name?" Steve asked me.

"Liz," I said, realizing that probably whether it was

Hawes or Losey wasn't going to matter from there on out. Helene said she was Helene.

"Ever work on an OD grinder?" Steve asked quickly.

"No," said we.

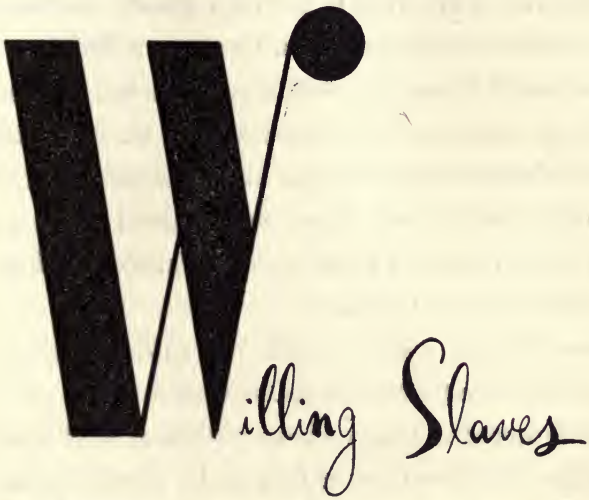
"Good," he said, "don't have to unlearn anything."

Then began one of the most fascinating times of my life. I had decided to try to learn my work as fast as I could so I would be able to pursue my investigations on the patriotism and problems of American women at work, the wisdom of trade union leaders, and the efficiency of women's work clothes. I did not expect to be interested at all by the work. Just find out how to do it and do it. I figured my aptitude for cutting and draping material proved the nimbleness of my fingers and I would get by.

I spent the first night standing by the only skilled operator in our section, a thin, quick-moving, Bostonian-accented young man named Rodger. Helene spent the night beside the only other worker in the section, a sandy haired woman of uncertain age named Jessie. She'd been in the plant three weeks. Steve had been there just three days—having been an operator in another Wright plant and promoted to a boss in this one.

This was a brand new plant. Half the machines had never yet been touched. We were not what is known as "in production." Plant Seven was slowly getting under way and whether or not a complete engine had ever been turned out, none of us knew. One thing was certain. I was to have the privilege of seeing something which few seasoned workers, or trade union leaders, have ever seen: the attempt to

develop a complete new production set-up which even at the start was more than half staffed by women—unskilled and green. When the thing was rolling, if the war were still on, there would be thousands and thousands and thousands of women workers under one roof doing men's work.



As far as making airplane engines goes, the first great shock comes with the discovery that while it is mass production and everyone has only his own particular bit of work to do, the doing of that bit of work is incredibly *un*automatic.

The second night after I went to work, Steve caught my eye as I stood by Rodger, crooked his finger, and led me over to a small grinder. It didn't seem small to me then—nor did it seem particularly frightening; just unknown.

"Watch me," Steve said. "You put this piece of work in this way. You start the machine here. You push this lever to bring the wheel to the work. You start the work

turning. You keep turning this wheel this way to grind off the right amount—turning it up to this stop, then back. Throw the wheel back from the work this way. Stop the work turning here. Take the piece out. Measure it. Here's your operation sheet. See? It says the OD should measure between .825 and .827. This is a rough grind, you have plenty of leeway—two thousandths. Can you mike?"

He meant could I measure with a micrometer, that instrument which measures the thousandths of an inch with which one is always dealing in this kind of a shop. Could I mike? I had a micrometer in my hands about one hour at school. I could read it. I knew about decimals. I miked. "It's .825 and a half," I said.

He measured it. "I make it .826," he said. "You can mike." We never went into that matter again.

One of the dreadful things about precision work—so-called precision work—is that it isn't really precise at all. No two people measure a piece of work exactly the same at all times with a micrometer. If you have a gauge to measure with, you can force the gauge out of wack with one slight push. This worried me terribly.

"Now you do it," Steve said. "But before you move anything, tell me exactly what you're going to do."

"Rodger has the wheel set so it grinds the right amount off automatically," I said to Steve.

"You learn to do it by hand first," he said. "Then you can use the automatics."

That, I thought, is idiotic. This is a war. All that matters is to get the stuff turned out. If the machine works auto-

matically, why make us learn to do it the old-fashioned way?

I ground a few pieces, measuring each one after it was ground. After a while I did one and it turned out to measure .826 and a half—too big. I had done everything exactly as before. "What'd I do wrong?" I asked Steve.

"Nothing," he said. "There's just one thing you have to remember about grinding. The machine changes every time you turn your back on it."

I laughed. A machine changes! Impossible, I thought.

After I'd been shown how to re-set the stop so I'd grind off the right amount again it dawned on me that the grinding wheel was grinding itself away all the time it also ground the gears. There is no automatic adjustment to take care of this. You have to adjust by hand.

The next night Steve put me at the same machine with the same job to do and said, "Okay. You can do it," and walked away.

"God," I thought. "Can I?"

I could—for a while—and then suddenly when I threw the wheel in toward the work, there was a loud noise. I had just enough sense to throw the wheel back and was looking up wild with fright, expecting the whole machine to fly apart when I saw Steve standing behind me laughing.

"That you just made is scrap," he said. "Put in another piece. Now go ahead."

I went ahead, shaking inwardly. Everything was okay. "But what did I do before?" I said.

Steve shook his head the way one does at a child. "You

forgot to do this!" He pushed the lever that made the work turn.

"Scrap!" I said, looking mournfully at the gear I had mutilated.

"Never mind," Steve said. "Everyone has to make a little scrap."

But even while I was learning, I got so nervous and upset when I made scrap—scrap for the Jap—that Steve would come along and say, "Look—everyone has bad nights. Go take a walk—a nice long walk." (Taking a walk was going to the ladies room and having a smoke, or lying down on your back there and giving yourself a lecture, or talking to some other girl who was also taking a walk.)

In school they had tried very hard to put into us the fear of being hurt by our machines. They did it in a regular class room with mimeographed papers which pointed out the danger points on machines we'd never even seen. They told us we would be scalped if we didn't wear caps—and then never made us wear caps. There was only one machine in the school shop, a radial drill, which could have scalped anyone.

Nobody ever had to tell me to be afraid of my grinding wheel after I saw one of the girls lose all the skin off her arm by brushing carelessly against the wheel. Steve told me, rather derisively, that she said afterward she didn't know the wheel was turning. I looked at my wheel and it was turning so fast you couldn't tell it was turning. I reflected that all my life I'd earned my living with my fin-

gers. It wasn't necessary for me to keep looking at the hospital at the end of our street to keep myself in a constant state of controlled alarm.

Steve told me a Mack truck could go between my fingers and that half inch which separated them from the wheel as I put the work in place and took it out. But that half inch looked to me like a hair's breadth. One night when he was teaching me to set the job up myself, on a bigger machine, I figured out a way to fix it so I could get the work out of line with the wheel when I put it in and took it out. That gave me about an inch clearance. Steve said it was okay to do it that way if it made me "happier about it." It sure did.

A lot of women complained, privately, about how hard it was to move the levers on the machines, which were new and stiff. One of them got her arm into such a condition, she was sent home to rest—without pay—for a month.

Then I was put on a big machine which had never been used before and the second night when I started to pull the lever to loosen the work, I found I had a fine sore arm. I was reluctant to complain because I liked to work on the big machines better than on the little ones. A big machine can do all the jobs a little one can do and many more besides. In the beginning, Steve intended to put the women only on the little machines.

"I'll be a cripple if this goes on," I told Steve. "Couldn't something be done to loosen the lever up?"

"Of course," he said. He called an engineer who un-

screwed the part and put it together again so it worked twice as easily.

Steve came along, gave it a try, shrugged his shoulders and said he wouldn't like it so easy, personally. I had a sudden feminine impulse to slap his face. But I reminded myself a lot of leadmen would have just removed me from the big machine instead of trying to get it fixed.

After about a week of learning how my machine worked, I began to learn how it didn't work. I found that after I took a walk it sometimes would grind off more when I began work again—and sometimes less. I found one machine took off the amount it was set for—and another took off twice as much. Worse than that, a machine would grind off twice what you expected for a while and then suddenly laugh to itself and start grinding half as much. Or vice versa.

Some nights a machine would not feel like working at all. You'd get it all set to grind a certain piece of work—and it would grind a couple of pieces okay—then, biff—it'd grind more on the left end of a gear than on the right. Develop a taper, that's called. Then, by dint of bracing up one end of the apparatus that holds the work—maybe with a piece of cellophane—the thing would grind straight for a while. Zoom—it would get bored with doing right and, without giving you the slightest indication, tapered your work off again.

"Never a dull moment on a grinder," Steve would say cheerily, bouncing up when he saw one of us looking thwarted. "What's happened now?"

Sometimes a machine would get so temperamental, it took the whole night to get it back into a good mood. This happened with all the machines, apparently. I met girls who worked on every sort of machine, "taking walks" which often extended the whole night through—waiting around while someone—some man—got their machine straightened around. It differed in different departments as to how much we women were taught about the machines themselves. Some of the departments had set-up men, men whose whole responsibility was to keep the machines going right.

Toward the end of the time I was at Wright's, I worked on a hand-screw machine. It could do about eight things to a piece of steel—cut away the ends, bore different sized holes, bevel edges, and so on. To do each thing, the operator pulled or pushed a different wheel or lever. About the only thing that seemed to go wrong was that the cutting tools broke or got dull. In that case the set-up man either got another tool and put it in or had to sharpen the original tool. The operator just stood and waited while this went on. The operator might as well have been taught to do it herself since it wasn't a bit complicated. Girls who'd been working over a year often said the men didn't want them to learn to adjust or set-up, but merely wanted them to run the machine. But Steve wanted us to learn everything, including how to set-up.

Setting-up means getting your machine arranged so it will do a certain job. Machines are all adjustable and you can more or less take them apart and re-construct them in

minor ways for different jobs. When you work in what's called a miscellaneous department, as I always did, you sometimes have two jobs in one night. You don't repeat the same job night after night, week after week, year after year.

If monotony is what makes machines a curse, I assure you it can be cured in a hurry. After I learned to grind, it took me exactly a half an hour to learn to operate a handscrew machine. The foremen and all the bosses pretty much agreed that once you learn to run one machine, you can run any of them.

So, if it's boring to run one machine and do one job all the time, then all that has to be done is let people rotate from department to department or machine to machine. I worked just as fast on a handscrew machine after half a day as the women who'd been doing it a year and I assure you, I am no particular genius with machines. Machines are not difficult to run. Anyone can learn to do it.

It seems to be traditional to think whatever machine you work on is better than any other machine. This idea has probably been developed by operators to encourage themselves and prevent their admitting they are not as skilled as someone else. They could all be equally skilled at running every machine in the shop—and I doubt if there is much difference as far as boredom goes.

In fact, machines are the least boring contraptions I've met in many a day. If you can't amuse yourself any other way, you can begin thinking how the machine could be improved. That is pretty easy. Of course, if you figure out an improvement which would cost a lot of money or mean

really making a new machine, then the chances of anyone listening to you are small.

"Machines are an evil and a curse, killing the souls of men!"

Nuts to the poets who have sung this song. Machines turn out useful things, to begin with. And a person feels useful and creative working one of the things because a machine can't run at all without a human to guide it.

Machines are capable of so much improvement that they might as well be wheel barrows. Is that boring? Does that idea sear your soul?

Machines are temperamental—as a woman. Maybe some of them are temperamental all the time, like grinders—and others only once a month. But temperament is always in the offing. A machine may make you mad, but it's mighty interesting—like women.

Did you ever hear of a Mr. John of John-Fredericks? He creates some of the most wonderful hats and bags and other knick-knacks the world will ever see. Most of the world has never seen his creations because they are too expensive. But he's a great artist and I wish him and the world no better thing than that he shall one day work for Montgomery Ward or Sears Roebuck.

After I left the plant, I went to get myself a hat from John. He asked me about the machines and I said I loved them.

"What is this, Lizzie?" John laughed. "All the women are going mad over the machines. There must be some sex about it."

Listen, John. You know how you love to create hats and how I loved to create clothes? Most of the women who are going to the machines now, never did a piece of creative work in their lives. The nearest many of them ever came to it was creating children and there nature controls everything after the first round.

These women used to be sandwich-makers, telephone operators, servants, salesgirls, secretaries, or housewives. Their jobs, though they might have been vital, were uncreative in the extreme. When you work the machine that makes the bit that turns the motor that raises the plane that's going to soar in the clouds—or a piece of the frigidaire, for that matter, that's going to keep the food from rotting—when you do that, you feel *creative.*

If, after a time, maybe only a year, you are bored with standing at your machine and earning your bread and butter—too little bread and butter at that; if you grow bitter after a few years of it and say things which cause the poets to sing of the machine's menace; if you are tied to your machine—the machine you have no opportunity to improve and which turns out the goods that Henry Ford or Wright's or anyone else sells for so much money; if you begin to believe you'll never have any more of that money than just a living wage:—then you have to vent your wrath on something or somebody. Maybe you vent it by hating your fellow workers who have a different colored skin or a different shaped nose or a different sex from yours. Or maybe you vent it by hating the boss.

But you can't hate the machine because the machine it-

self is like a rather helpless little dog. If you treat it nicely, pat it and coddle it, command it endlessly to do as you say, it will serve you well. It will amuse and comfort you. If you give it a lot of attention, it will end, not by eating you up, but by becoming your willing slave. Machines are servants any woman can use easily and enjoy without qualms.

My life, while I worked at Plant Seven, settled into a pattern rather quickly. Things at home worked out pretty much as I'd planned.

Sometimes I didn't see my husband for a couple of days because his work kept him late and I'd leave before he came home at night. I saw Gavrik every day and, liking his school and the teacher who lived with us, he seemed none the worse for wear.

One night, as an extra-curricular activity, I tried going out to Brooklyn to make a speech about child care centers and almost missed my ten-thirty bus to the plant. After that

I decided I'd better stick to my grinding and my homework.

It is a constant fight, if you work on the third shift, to make any kind of adjustment to the rest of the world. You come home about 8:30 A.M., eat some breakfast or dinner or whatever you call it. Then you know you'd better get to bed quick because if you have to get your child from school or want to have dinner with your husband or anyone who has normal working hours, you must be up around five. So you force yourself to try and sleep immediately after work.

If you have children coming home for lunch, or the cleaning to do or if you shop every day for food, your sleep gets sandwiched in between household jobs. If you do all the family laundry, as almost every woman in the plant did, instead of catching up with your sleep on Sunday, you wash and iron all day.

But win, lose, or draw on the sleep problem, we workers almost all strolled, staggered or ran into the bus station on time every night. My group of Plant Seven workers had a special bus which went directly to the plant and got us there half an hour before the shift started.

The bus seated about fifty people, just about the number who took it every night when I started work. The older or more serious minded workers sat in the front where they talked quietly or slept.

Those in the rear gave themselves whole heartedly to the business of singing, playing mouth organs, making light love, and wise cracking. We were the usual War Plant League of Nations—Mexicans, Italians, Poles, English,

United Statesians, white, tan, and black skinned, Catholic, Protestant, Jew and non-believer. The ride only took a half hour and everyone was friendly.

The very first night on the bus, I discovered the main preoccupations of all new employees.

"Doris got her number changed yesterday. I've been in a week longer than she has, and nobody has said a word about changing my number!"

"Why don't you ask your leadman?"

"Oh, no. I wouldn't do that."

"Anyway, my leadman said I'd have my number changed last week and it wasn't changed."

The badge I received the first night had the number 689-127. One two seven was the number I punched in under on the time clock. It stood for E. Hawes which was, and remained, the name on my pay checks. I worked in department 688 but I was given the number 689, a near one to the real department number, to indicate that I was a learner. I was on trial.

The trial period ended, a learner's number was changed to the real department number and the learner changed into an operator. There was no system for doing this. It could happen any time during the first four months. If it didn't happen by then, you were supposed to be fired.

Why want your number changed in a hurry? Logically the reason went back to the way we were paid. We were hired to work at 60 cents an hour for a forty hour week and time and a half for the eight hours overtime we all must work—a six day week, eight hours a day. The men, when

they became operators, could work a seven day week—or let's say must, if so requested. For Sunday work, they were paid double time. Thus, as a learner, one received $31.60 per week before deductions; plus a ten percent bonus for the third and least desirable shift. As an operator, a man could add another $9.60 by working seven days.

At the end of two months, everyone had an automatic nickel an hour raise. One of the major gripes was that the raise never seemed to be put through right on the dot of when it was due. In fact, nobody knew whether two months was two calendar months or eight weeks. I saw a lot of war effort spent trying to figure out just which week this first raise came, and later the two other automatic nickel raises, at the end of the third and fourth months. In any event, at the end of four months, the pay was 75 cents an hour, time and a half for the 8 hours over forty, and double time for men for Sunday. After nine months, there was another nickel raise. But for new workers that was too remote to think about.

When I went to work, none of this was ever put down in writing and every interviewer who hired had his own way of saying how the raises came. Later the company gave out mimeographed statements. I remember vaguely I was told in seven months or so I could make $75 a week. Actually at the end of seven months, I would have been earning $45.00 a week gross, from which would be deducted my bonds, social security, taxes, etc.—leaving me about thirty-five dollars.

At Wright's they had a department bonus system for all

plants. The extra work a department did over its quota was paid for in this way, distributed among all the workers of the department. In the new Plant Seven, most of the departments were not in production and had no department bonuses. But when we became operators we did get a small efficiency bonus of a dollar or so a week.

After working in Plant Seven, I went for a short time to a Wright Plant which was in production. There I was put into the department which had the highest bonus in the place—some weeks it got as high as forty-nine percent. If I'd stayed there seven months, I would only have been taking home with me about $50 a week including the bonus.

We bus riders were almost all so new we didn't get more than sixty-five or maybe seventy cents an hour and we had no big bonus to look forward to.

Captain Rickenbacker and his ilk will say: "But even you, a complete novice, were taking home about $29 a week at the start. And to get $35 a week after six months—how can the workers complain?"

"Give me my $18 in peace time," they'd say on the bus. "I could buy more food with that than I can with what I get now."

There was the millinery salesman who had three kids and a wife—and who got thinner and tireder looking day by day. There was the Mexican boy who had two kids and a wife, and whose wife used to work but now the baby was there, she couldn't because who would take care of it? And Annie, a Negro woman, who was moved over from another

plant, where she had a bonus, into this one where she had no bonus—just moved. She was a widow with a child and a mother and father to support.

There were all the women whose sons had gone to war and stopped contributing to the family income and the women who'd seen their husbands unemployed through the last depression—on relief—and who were trying to stack up something against the peace (and possible depression) to come.

"The women are just working for money! Unpatriotic!"

Unpatriotic! Since when has it been unpatriotic to try and earn your living? To support your children? To make up for the income your fighting sons aren't bringing home?

"We must get the women into industry who have no responsibilities," they say. "Let those who have children and must keep house stay at home."

Give the jobs to the people who don't need them, who have no responsibilities. That's fine, but who is to pay for the food, clothing, and shelter for the others who have responsibilities?

So the prices went up and the profits went up and some of the "unpatriotic" war workers fell more and more into debt waiting that happy day when they'd be making the big money—the big money that a few skilled workers who'd been doing this work for years were making.

We new workers from Plant Seven went to work on the bus and we all wanted our numbers changed—to be operators—because at least we wanted our diplomas! Maybe

some day the plant would get into production—and we would get a bonus and. . . .

I will always remember the millinery salesman's face the morning he leaned over to me as I sat down across from him. "You know," he whispered, "I'm going to get my number changed. It's silly, but I'm just as happy as a child! Now I can work Sundays," he added. "More money, you know. I've been awfully worried." Then, "You know, I've been working two machines for two weeks and I figured I'd have to get something out of it." He looked out the window thoughtfully for a while. "Say," he said softly, "You know the men on the second and first shift only work one machine. Don't you think there's something queer about that?"

"Yes," I said. "Why don't you take it up?"

He shook his head doubtfully and the beautiful, child-like happiness gradually faded as he kept shaking his head to himself while the bus took him back to his wife and the kids.

The average wage for defense workers in this country is about $35 a week. When the millinery salesman finally earned this magnificent sum, $8.00 of it would go for decent housing for his family of four, with heat, light, and gas thrown in. An adequate food budget for four is $20 a week. Transportation to and from work cost this man $3.60 a week. The family would have a grand total of $3.40 a week left for clothes, medical expense, amusements, cigarettes, telephoning—$3.40 a week for everything but food and housing.

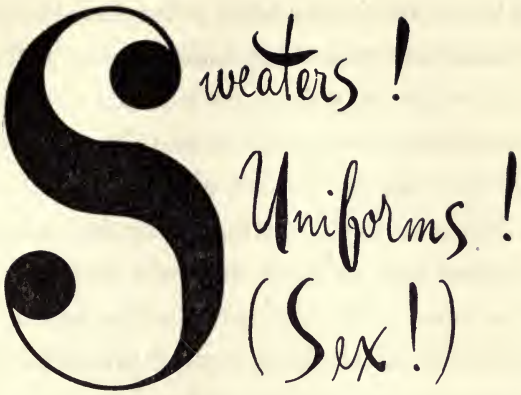
I don't know whether Captain Rickenbacker has a wife and two kids—but I do know that even if he is single, he doesn't live on $35 a week.

An unmarried defense worker with no responsibilities can get along perfectly well on $35 a week. But the idea that the average worker in any war industry is highly paid or, as is popularly supposed, bathes daily in champagne, is sheer Nazi propaganda.

If the salesman's wife was among those women who curse and cry to themselves as they wash the clothes and clean the house and buy the food every day; if she spoke sharply to the kids or even hit them now and then; if she wished to heaven she could get out and earn some money and not do this eternal housework all day, and added her voice to the clamor of those who were asking government funds for adequate child care provisions so they could work; and if the Mayor of New York answered her back: *The worst mother is better than the best nursery school. Woman's place is in the home*—

Would you blame her if she felt like committing murder?

More money was what we all agreed we needed and we didn't feel in the least unpatriotic about it. We only wanted it to keep alive and healthy. Having agreed upon this, we arrived every night at the plant. And we all went in to do our work with few tears, much laughter, and no flag waving.



Male and female, less than half the plant people wore their work clothes while traveling to work. If you operate a machine that is cooled with oil, it gets all over you and smells. On the grinder we had a solution of water, lye and some sort of soda and one of the first things workers ever said when they were assigned to a grinder was that it was nice *clean* work. I wore my work clothes to work, except my cap which I kept in my locker.

Upon arrival at the plant, we all went to the male and female locker rooms. The gents got on an old pair of pants and any comfortable kind of shirt. The girls put on their uniforms.

The uniforms were either light or dark blue, denim or twill slack suits. You could wear the shirt in or out of the pants. The caps were made of net and a sort of oil skin in two shades of blue with a dark blue visor.

Most of the women made some attempt to achieve individuality, despite the written instructions which said wear such and such and wear low heels. Some wore white shoes

—some quite high heels. Many wore white or bright colored silk or knitted cotton shirts under their blue blouses, pulling out the colored collar, or pulling their inside sleeves out from under the short sleeves of the blouse. Practically every wench perched her cap on the back of her head and a few of them wore little bows in their hair, putting their caps on with the visor turned back so the bows would show.

The results of a prescribed uniform were in general exactly like those in the old-fashioned girls' prep-school where all were supposed to dress alike. After a few weeks of trying to keep neat or find some way of looking individual, almost everyone gave up and simply went around looking like hell. The pants didn't fit and there was nothing to do about that. Unless you were a pigmy like me, the bottom of the shirt hit just half way down the fanny if you wore it out, so everyone looked as wide as possible from the rear. Most women took to slouching around with a sort of half-put-together look. The general effect was of a large number of females in a machine shop in pajamas. The eternal sight of plain light or navy blue began to have a sickening effect on one's stomach.

I wouldn't give this space to clothes if the nation's press didn't always give the "problem" big headlines and constant feature play. Sweaters! Uniforms! Women workers perilled by scalping! Ford tries to put his typists into slacks! War plant forbids women to wear slacks to work, but insists they wear them in the plant! Ye Gods!

A tempest in a teapot in wartime? No. To begin with, no woman who goes to work in a machine shop deliberately

wishes to get her hair or clothes caught in the machinery. But we all know the hazards are different on every machine.

It is, however, a sad but true fact that a vast number of women have never in war or peace given any thought to their clothes in relation to what they do in them. Where it becomes a matter of their physical safety, they often need to be made to think.

When, instead of trying to make them think and decide for themselves what they'll wear in accordance with certain specified safety rules; instead of giving them an opportunity to work the matter out, the management just says: "Here! You aren't capable of thinking this matter through. Wear this and like it" well, what does the management expect but a childish response?

Instead of trying to work the clothing problem out in an organized fashion by having the management name the hazards and send anyone home who is hazardous *in relation to a machine,* the girls leaped to the conclusion that it was all a plot to make them unattractive and spoil their sex appeal.

Frankly, I have an idea many managements are childish enough to think they really can solve the sex problem by dint of trying to make all the women look alike. Generally their idea of solving the sex problem is to try and stamp it out.

Sure, there *could* be a sex problem in a war plant with male and female workers. There *may* be a sex problem wherever there are males *and* females. But there is more

likely to be one where there are *all* males or *all* females!

There wasn't any sex problem at Plant Seven that I could find and I made quite a study of it since a tremendous national magazine allowed as how the only kind of piece which would interest them about women workers was one I'd write on sex in a war plant. When the editor saw my finished piece, he said he'd never ordered it.

The sex problem in war plants is mostly in the minds of the many eager white-collared gentlemen like that editor who keeps asking people like me about the matter. There is sex in war plants, sure. But it's absolutely no problem to anyone. If you want it, you can have it—and if you don't want it, nobody bothers you.

The females are all supposed to be able to make up their own minds and make their own choices as they are supposed to be earning their own livings. Some of the females cheat. One little creature went flipping herself around night after night at Plant Seven and then, when a sub-foreman made her the proposition she'd been signaling for with her wiggles, she turned around and asked her union shop steward to save her! Boy, the unions have some new problems on their hands these days.

One night Rodger came up to me in a cold rage and said, "You keep asking about how the women act. Well, let me tell you they better get wise to themselves if they're going to work in places like this. Now, on the road there were a couple of women I knew who'd been traveling saleswomen for twenty years. They knew how to behave."

I wanted to ask Rodger if it was the blond on the lathes

who had let him down or the brunet up in the ID grinding department. But whichever one, I was on his side, having noticed the willing appearance of both of them.

The gents in the second plant where I worked, an old plant with well-developed policies on all matters, apparently dealt with the girls firmly when they started luring men and then screaming for help. The boys just took that type out after work and beat them up. Usually the girls liked it, I was told. So I gathered that in the long run, there were absolutely no sex problems.

The most lurid story the veteran women workers in the old plant had to tell me was about one of the girls who worked in a crib and did not have to wear a uniform. Every day she wore a different colored sweater to work. Every day the boys lined up and whistled at her when she came to work.

It then developed they had formed a pool on the subject. Every lad put in a nickel every day and they bet on what color sweater she'd wear. The one who guessed right got the money.

If the girl wanted one of the boys, I guess she got him all right—for free. I will swear on the Bible that if she didn't want one, she was left strictly to her own devices except for the whistling.

Of course, there were a few jealous old cats with tired blond hair and drooping mouths who used to sit on benches in the locker room and say, "See that girl? She's the one who . . ."

But most of them were more like the woman in the bus

whom I asked one morning why the bus was full at night and then half empty when we went home. "Oh," she said, "a lot of them go off to hotels together, I guess." Smiling she went on to speak of her children.

Maybe the management thinks the male workers would cut off their hands inadvertently if female workers were allowed to wear sweaters or plaid shirts or overalls or even skirts. But most of the men said the women all looked younger and more attractive in their sloppy work clothes than they did in their regular clothes. As for the women who complain about wearing slacks, it might be well for them to consider that it's kind of exciting for the guys to see a lot of females looking entirely different from the normal routine of silk stocking and high heel. Nothing like changing your type from time to time if you want to get attention, girls.

At Plant Seven it was really up to your foreman whether or not you stuck to your uniform. Some foremen sent girls home who had the effrontery to risk hurting the war effort by wearing a plaid shirt or an overall.

After the first night, I started wearing my overalls under the blue shirt of my uniform. My overalls fitted, whereas the crotch of my uniform pants hit me at the knee. The third night I stuck the shirt inside the overall, but it irked me because the sleeves caught me when I put my arms forward. So I wore a knitted cotton shirt under my navy top and bided my time.

There was air conditioning in the plant—and it didn't work yet. All night long over the loud speaker you'd hear

"Temporary Heat Man" being paged. Some section was either freezing or boiling. What I did was take care of my own temporary heat problem one night by removing my thick navy blue uniform top and working in my overalls and cotton shirt. Nobody said anything—so that was that. I kept a sweater in my locker in case I should have a temporary cold problem—but it never came up.

Many women asked me where I got my overalls. They also asked me how I got away with wearing a knitted shirt. I wasn't trying to start a rebellion. I just said it was cooler and more comfortable and that my foreman didn't object, and then they'd get the same look in their eye that women in elevators in New York used to have a few years before when I went around the city in slacks if I felt like it. They'd eye me—and if we were alone, they'd often say. "Gee! I wish I dared wear slacks."

Maybe a few tears will cease to fall now the time has arrived when wenches can wear trousers if they feel like it!

After the first few nervous days during which we all discovered we could make our new servants—the machines—turn out the goods, we lifted up our heads and began to look around.

We, in our section, began with Rodger, who'd once been a grinder for five years and then spent six selling some household device all over the country; Jessie, who'd been a teacher and had two sons in the army; Helene, mother and former housewife whose husband had gone to war; myself. Then came Janet who'd worked in an embroidery shop, been married five months and was waiting for her tool-designing husband to stop being deferred; Sylvia, a Negro wife and mother whose husband had a job in Washington; Bill and Charlie, both ex-liquor salesmen and a jolly little Scotch woman named Nelly who had worked in England in a plant during the last war.

As each new employee came, he or she was assigned to an old timer (maybe an old timer of two weeks) for a night or two or three. It was customary for the novice to run

errands for the veteran. The veteran, in turn, let you do a few pieces of work from time to time, broke you in.

In this way we learned where the crib was and got to be friends with the people who found us the tools we wanted. We picked up scraps of information and made little jokes. It was while I stood waiting at the crib one day that I first heard one of the theme songs many of the men sang over and over to themselves as they looked around them. "Women—women—women—what's going to happen after the war? Will the men ever get their jobs back?"

Or, as a very pretty girl honked the horn of the little truck she was driving, a male, forgetting the female menace, would murmur softly, "Ummmmm! They hire nothing but pretty girls for us to look at." Then he'd add "Pretty girls and WOLVES," and wave his eyelashes at the nearest woman, laughing uproariously.

We discovered how to get the orders for the jobs we had to turn out and we found out where the inspector was who tested our gauges and micrometers to see if they were accurate. We were supposed to have these instruments inspected every night before we started work. But as we got our own jobs to do, we learned not to bother because it took too long. Instead we tested our gauges against each other and against our micrometers. Only when none of them agreed did we bother to walk a mile to the tool inspection crib.

We fought the inspectors of our work who were supposed to pass on the first piece we made on each order—because we learned rapidly to inspect our own work and we

tried never to take a piece to be inspected until we had a perfect one. Even then they'd often say it was wrong. They were new and inexperienced like us. We'd come back from them and say to Steve, "The inspector again!" He'd go over and often show the inspector how to measure the piece, and that it was right. Or maybe we'd find out our micrometers were "out"—measuring inaccurately—and then we'd walk the mile to get them fixed.

Finally I found one reason why it didn't matter so much if I miked a piece one way and Steve slightly differently. At first, as I measured each piece and my machine changed on me, I'd often have to lay pieces aside, weeping inwardly, saying scrap for the Jap over and over to myself.

Then Steve would come along and I'd say coldly, "That's scrap, Steve. It's under-sized."

"How much?" he'd ask, getting out his mike or putting the piece into a gauge. "Two Thousandths! What is this? Oh, a rough grind. That's okay."

We usually had two grinds on the same gear. After it had gone through its first processes on other machines, we smoothed it down and evened it up for further work. This was known as a rough grind. Our operation sheet, a little blue print telling us in pictures and with decimals what we were to do and the tools and gauges we were to use, said we must get it between .825 and .827. But actually, when you looked at the blue print of the whole job, you found the next person was going to cut away say ten thousandths of an inch. So if you had inadvertently cut two thousandths too much, it didn't spoil the piece.

But one learned to hate the unknown, unskilled people who had previously cut their pieces too much—or too little—giving you a job where every single piece had a different amount to take off in order to try and make them uniform. And you blessed the one who had sent along a job with all the pieces as they were supposed to be so you could avoid endlessly measuring every different piece before you ground it.

Then we had the finish grind to do—taking off the last hair's breadth which was to make one gear mesh right with another. We'd have to get it within a half a thousandth of an inch of exactitude—with a primitive machine that sulked or jumped ahead. That was when I realized the automatics didn't really count. It was easier and often quicker to shut them off and turn the wheels yourself; stop grinding the piece when you felt like it, measure it in the machine and make sure you weren't going to inadvertently take off too much.

When you had that kind of job to do and the pieces came to you uneven, and often already smaller than they were supposed to be when you finished, you cursed the people who'd spoiled the job before it ever got to you.

Measure, measure, measure—half the pieces in this lot are already undersized, Steve. Put them aside, says he. Then later in the night, he says now clean all those pieces up, get the copper plate off them. But they're already too small. No—clean them all up. But the operation sheet says—and the blue print says—. Clean them up. WHY?

Because when all the bits and pieces go to the final in-

spection, there are hundreds a shade too big—but the same size—and hundreds a shadow too small—but the same size. And out of the bigger pieces and out of the smaller pieces, motors are made for schools—motors which never leave the ground. That's what becomes of the work the final inspectors can't pass because you and I measure a little differently! *Precision* work? No—only as precise as our measuring devices and our machines could make it in A.D. 1943.

But because the speed and accuracy with which you can work depends entirely on what other workers have already done, you look for team work.

"For this job," says Steve, "get this number out of the crib and a surface gauge. Never mind the tools it calls for on the operation sheet."

I get it and bring it to the table by my machine. "Now," Steve says, "you see they tell you to measure in such and such a fashion. But all you have to do is use this little block and set the work on it like this and read the gauge. It's twice as fast."

"Sure is," say I.

"I figured it out and had the block made," Steve says with justified pride. "Be sure you put it back in the crib before the first shift comes on," he adds a trifle darkly.

"But I don't think I will finish this job. I thought we were always to leave the whole set-up on an unfinished job for the next shift."

"This is *our* set-up," Steve says. "It makes it so we can work faster. See, they always say the third shift is no good.

We'll show 'em. In the other plant we used to turn out much more work than the other shifts on some jobs—on account of figuring out things like this."

"But," I reply, "it's so *childish.* If you have a way of doing it faster, *everyone* ought to know!"

Steve laughs. "You'll find out how it is about the third shift," he says. "We always get the bad end of everything." He looks at me and then says, "Well, if you feel that way about it, go and show the second shift how to do it. But they won't tell the first shift."

Team work? Team work slowed up by years of management pitting one shift and one worker against another. The competitive, free enterprise, individual American spirit—slowing up production.

Later I found that regardless of why the management wanted us to get to our machines ten minutes before the preceding shift left, *we* had a reason. If the guy on your machine had left you half a job to finish, and taken credit for 200 pieces out of the 400 to be done, you dashed in and started spot-checking his pieces like mad before he left. Because if it should turn out he'd done them wrong, who was to say who'd done the 200 bad pieces and who the 200 good pieces, unless you found out and pinned the bad on him before he left?

And for whom were we all working? I asked Steve one night how he liked working on the management side, as they call it when you're a boss; whether he didn't really like it better when he was just one of us. He made no more

money than any skilled operator, being a small boss. He said, "Who are you working for in the end?"

"Of course, we're all working for Wright's," I said. "But it seems cosier to me being in with a lot of people."

"In the end," said Steve, "you're working for yourself."

However, I later learned in a most pointed and disagreeable fashion that if I were to be able to look myself in the face while working *for* Wright's, I'd better take the attitude I was working entirely *with*, and at least partly for, my fellow employees. And it was Steve who taught it to me with one look.

Sylvia, the Negro girl, came to work in our department after I'd been there a little over three weeks. There were many Negroes in the plant and, used as I was to expect to see them slapped down, I could scarcely credit the fact that there didn't seem to be the slightest discrimination against them.

I first asked a white girl who'd been several months in the plant whether my eyes deceived me. She said my eyesight was okay.

"Of course," she added, "some of the foremen have to learn. One day our foreman took us white girls aside and said he knew we liked to kid around with the boys and all that—but we better not kid around with the Negro boys."

"So?"

"So, we told him we'd kid around with anyone we felt like kidding around with," she said, "and you should have seen the look on his face. We told him maybe it was better for us to kid around with the Negro boys because there was

less chance of their misunderstanding us and taking advantage than there is with the white fellas. He'll learn," she added.

Now and then I heard some white employees saying they didn't like the Niggers or the Jews; but I also saw white and Negro women walking arm in arm down the long corridors to their machines, white men and Negro women eating their "lunch" together, and Negro men and white girls laughing together at the same jokes.

Some of the white girls complained when they had their lockers next to Negroes and that's when I discovered the lady counsellors performed a role which certainly made the statement about their being present to wake us up in the locker room a libel. They had talks with those white girls who complained about the Negroes and discussed why we were fighting this war.

Any Senator who says we don't need a war propaganda agency in this country to tell the people why we are fighting the war should have those counsellors work out on him. The white girls said they hadn't ever thought of the war that way. A lot of more "important" people hadn't either.

Steve put Sylvia by my machine her first night and we chatted about her child and how there was no after-school program to take care of him in the afternoon; about the transportation problem and the price of food. At the end of the night I stepped aside and let her do some work, at which she was, of course, very slow. But she wasn't nervous and was more accurate than a lot of them who came.

The second night I asked her if she wanted to start and

she said she was in no hurry, and that I should go ahead. So I got the job set up and asked her if she'd please return the hammer I'd borrowed from Rodger.

"I am not here to run errands," said Sylvia.

I felt as if I'd been smacked in the face and finally observed that we all ran errands in the beginning. Then I began to get mad. After I'd worked in stony silence for quite a while, Sylvia disappeared. She'd taken quite a few "walks" the first night, as everyone did who just had to stand and look.

Heaven knows what kind of a look I had on my face when Steve came up and asked, "What's the matter with you?"

"That girl—what's her name?" I began fiercely.

"Sylvia?"

"Yes. You better take her away from my machine," I said.

"Yeah?" Steve drawled.

"So she won't run errands," I spit. "I'll hit her over the head with the . . ." It was then Steve gave me that look—the one which said: "Exactly what kind of a wench are you, taking this up with me? Turning your fellow worker over to the police?"

"What did you ask her to do?" was what he asked me in actual words.

"Return Rodge's hammer," I responded limply.

He looked at me for a while and then suddenly he said: "I'll fix her. Where is she?" And he had that kind of a

look in his eye you associate with small bosses. It wasn't a bit becoming or natural.

"Oh, never mind," I began, when Sylvia suddenly ambled into sight.

"What's the matter with you?" Steve said bluntly. "You look terrible." I looked and saw she did look sick. "Put your hair up under your cap where it belongs," said Steve curtly. "It's all hanging down." It was.

Sylvia stared at him and gave a slow push to a strand of hair. Steve always said he didn't know what to do with the women half the time because he'd never had a course in psychology. But no psychologist could have taught him a better way to "fix" a gal than to tell her she looked awful.

"Why don't you stay where you're told to stay?" he snorted and then strode off.

Sylvia propped herself against the table and stood looking stonily out at a number of empty machines. After a while I summoned my courage and said, "Look, if you're feeling sick, go and lie down. There's no use just standing there all night."

"I got cramps," Sylvia said. "It's my first night. Always get cramps. He told me to stand here. He's got it in for me, I guess," she added quietly, but with no surprise.

So, instead of telling her it was I who'd had it in for her, I went off and told Steve she was sick. Why didn't he tell her to go and lie down? He looked at me a little sourly and said he couldn't tell her to go and lie down in the locker room. It was officially against the rules. If he told her, she'd have to go lie down in the hospital.

Pretty soon the sub-foreman turned up and said to Sylvia, "If you feel sick, go and lie down in the hospital."

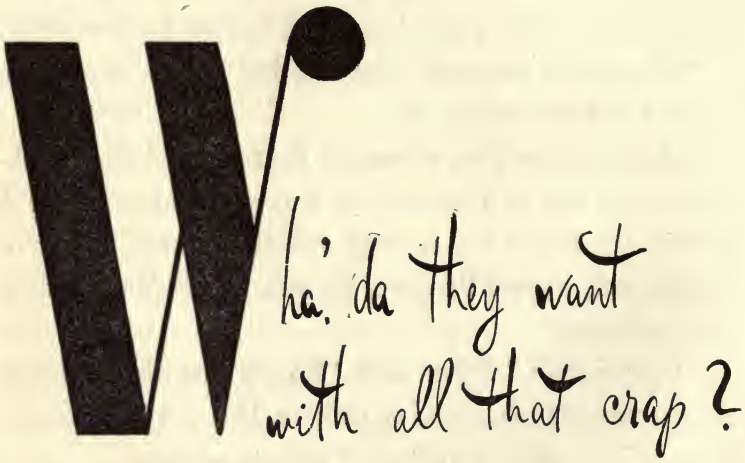
"I don't feel sick," Sylvia said.

Later I asked her if she wanted to do some work.

"No," she said. "He'll give me a machine when he gets around to it. Then I'll work."

For days Steve left Sylvia standing like an albatross by my side and maybe he would have left her there forever and I would have died of it, if she hadn't finally had recourse to that organization the workers have created to try and fix the bosses who try and fix them.

The organization is called a union.



Jessie, the wench whom Steve had put by me when I first began to work, to prevent my making any fatal mistakes, started out her career at the plant with exactly the opposite attitude from Sylvia. Jessie was helpfulness itself.

She expounded her philosophy to me the very first time we worked together. I think I started her off by saying I

wished I could wear overalls, they were so much more comfortable.

With a kind of warning tone in her voice, but absolutely no aggression, Jessie told me that she thought the best way to get on in any job, the best way to get on in the plant, was just to do what you were told. Just keep your mouth shut and do it—and not go around complaining about the rules. Just be polite to everyone and do your work. That's what she'd always done.

Rodger was always polite, she went on. A nice boy. He understood his job. In fact, he understood it better than Steve, if you asked her. Did I know they'd offered Rodger a leadman's job and he'd turned it down? She really thought he'd make a better leadman than Steve.

Of course, Steve was all right but—he absolutely never said please. Just ordered you around as if—well—of course, he probably hadn't had the education Rodger had—but he might be more polite. I reflected to myself how utterly dreadful Gentlewomen were in any kind of trade, and thanked God I wasn't one.

The next night, when I was alone at my machine, and Steve was standing by for a few minutes, I asked him if Jessie was a good worker, leading up to it with a few queries on women workers in general. Steve said, yes, she was all right.

But with just a little prodding, he finally said she drove him crazy. No matter how many times he explained anything, she came and asked him questions all night long. She'd been there nearly a month. She certainly knew how

to run a machine by that time. Why did she have to go on and on asking all those questions? The same questions, over and over again.

"Why don't you tell her to shut up?" I asked him.

"Yes," he said, "a fine idea! And then she goes to the personnel and she's got two sons in the army and she says I'm pushing her around. I'd get hell bawled out of me."

"But there can't be many like her," I said. "Most of these gals look tough enough. Can't you deal with them straight?"

"They're tough enough outside," Steve said, "but inside . . ."

"You mean they can't take a bawling out?"

"They cry," Steve said simply.

I could hear a great roar of voices from male department store managers and male magazine editors and males of all kinds everywhere echoing the words:

"They cry. Why do women cry?"

About the most embarrassing thing a female can do to a male in any kind of business is to cry in front of him. I doubt if the management at Plant Seven had ever given out an edict to the small bosses not to make us cry. It wouldn't have been necessary anyway because there aren't any men anywhere who want to make us wenches cry.

But there had been orders about the treatment of female employees which, although hysterically funny to me, probably only succeeded in making the foremen and sub-foremen and leadmen and set-up men absolutely loathe us.

One night, upon having an inspector tell me a perfect

piece of work was wrong, I returned to find Steve and the sub-foreman together and, striding up to them, I said, "Those God-damned inspectors! Does this go on forever?" At which they both blushed heavily—and I thought it was from horror at a woman swearing.

I discovered, however, that while *we* could legally swear, they couldn't. They had been forbidden to swear in front of any woman employee. Can you beat that? No wonder the foreman looked grim the night he received Helene and me. Here were two more wenches before whom he couldn't say hell if he felt like it, lest we tender little beings go and complain of the foul language.

Oh, I know swearing is stupid. Steve told me he was really just as glad they'd made the rule because he used to swear all the time and sometimes outside the shop it didn't go so well. This way he was breaking himself of the habit. I almost wished the management would forbid me to swear so I could get over it too.

A much finer rule came up when I asked Steve one night what a bastard file was.

"Where did you hear of that?" he asked, looking at me out of the corner of his eye. Maybe he thought I was a company spy, because when I said, "Why, the girls over there use them and I just wondered why they were bastard," he relaxed visibly and laughed a little bitterly.

"I wondered where you'd heard of it," he said, "because we were told never to mention a bastard file in front of a woman."

"What'd they expect you to call it?" I asked. "Isn't that

its name?" He nodded. "What'd they expect you to do about hermaphrodite calipers?" I asked.

"They didn't mention them," he said. "I guess they thought nobody knew what it meant. But I saw one of them once." We proceeded to have a conversation about hermaphrodites in general and the one he'd seen in particular.

And then the conversation swung back to Jessie—as it kept swinging back to her right up to the day I left the plant.

"I'm going to put her on the lappings machines and keep her there," Steve told me one night. "She can learn to lap and stop asking me questions."

Lapping is a very particular job, I think. But it is horribly monotonous. You have boxes full of gears, the hollow little shafts of which have been beveled inside at each end. The machine which does the beveling doesn't necessarily make the two bevels at either end square with one another or with the inside of the shaft. So someone has to take every piece and hold the bevel up against a twirling grinding stone which is shaped like the writing end of a sharp pencil and fits inside the shaft. And that someone has to just develop a knack for grinding out the inside of the bevel in such a way that when you put it on the apparatus which tests it, you find the bevels are square with each other and with the inside of the shaft.

I'm sure anyone can get the knack in a week. Doing it right depends on the pressure you exert when you push the shaft up against the grinding stone—and on keeping the pressure evenly all around while holding the piece abso-

lutely square. Of course it is sheer madness that a pair of hands should hold the piece but that's how it's still being done.

We might as well have all learned to lap and then we could have taken turns driving ourselves crazy doing it. But it is supposed to be more efficient to drive one person quite crazy than to divide up the job and give everyone time to do something more interesting in between.

So, as I watched Jessie going grimly insane night after night on the damn lapping machine, I finally asked Steve why he didn't give her a crack at an OD grinder again. Maybe the questions she asked were just an honest effort to make certain she was doing right. Maybe, I said, she'll turn out more useful than I in the end. For, as the weeks went by and I grabbed off all the teaching time I could, I was beginning to get a guilty conscience, realizing that I wasn't going to stay at the plant but had to leave to meet a contract to write a book.

In spite of the fact that I was one of teacher's pets, nothing was done about this matter through me. It just happened that Jessie turned up one night by Rodger's machine. And soon she was on her own OD grinder, with Rodger answering her questions, of which there were less and less.

Jessie was scarcely speaking to Steve by then. She had pursued her policy of doing just as she was told. But she had gone to Jake, the sub-foreman, one night and said she wouldn't stay if she had to be on the lapping machine. And I have no doubt that in her prim way, while doing just as she was told, she said she preferred to work with Rodger—

and doubtless she managed to convey the information to Jake that Steve was no gentleman in her opinion.

I can well imagine the subsequent conversation between Jake and Steve with both of them swearing violently in the absence of wenches, behind the closed door of Jake's office and Steve shrugging his shoulders and saying, "Okay. So let's give her to Rodge. Just so long as she isn't in my hair," or whatever ungentlemanly words he used to convey the same idea. And Jake agreeing with Steve in his quiet way —and "uncomplaining" Jessie getting her way.

By this time, Janet had come to work and she and I were both busily learning everything we could absorb as fast as possible. I had a head start by one week but she caught up with me in no time and then we went ahead, neck and neck, learning to set up and get the tapers out of our machines and dress our wheels and get some speed in our work. We even went so far as to both develop allergies to the cooling fluid on our grinders, that "clean" stuff of water and soap and soda which sprayed out over our arms as we worked and in which we soaked our hands, taking the work in and out.

We both burst out in a nasty, itching rash. The nurse in the little hospital near where we worked was very nice and produced several things to stop the itch. Mine wouldn't stop unless I kept it covered up. So every night I went to the hospital before I started grinding and had both arms bandaged. The nurse and I used to joke about whether she'd be bandaging me for the duration. The arm began to

clear up but there was no way of covering my hands. They got worse and worse, sort of like eczema.

I was an old She-Wolf who'd trained my husband as best I could not to worry about me but Janet was pretty and appealingly small, young and newly married. She worried so much about her disease—and worried her new husband so much—that between them she finally went to the big plant hospital after work. There a doctor gave her some stuff to soak her arms in and told her to keep away from the machine for a few days.

So Janet spent a few nights away from the machine, did what the doctor ordered, and evidently began to work up an immunity to the fluid.

But both of us complained to Steve nevertheless, since I was getting worse and she was still itching after two weeks of treatment. He said it absolutely couldn't come from the machine. He'd been grinding five years and never saw anyone get the disease. Nor had Ned, the foreman, nor Jake, the sub-foreman. When we complained, they just gave us that sidewise look reserved for women workers. Steve would laugh gaily and say, "The girls can't take it," over and over until I wondered why I liked him, and the other two men just shook their heads.

I am afraid that I was guilty of a little dirty work about my occupational disease. I knew that I'd leave sometime—and I knew equally well I got it from the cooling fluid and that it would probably go away eventually. I could have gone to my own doctor about it. I could have done all the things Janet did. But I waited to see if the nurse would ever

think to send me to the big hospital. And I waited to see if Ned or Jake or Steve or anyone would really try to find out what caused it. I waited, in effect, to see how much the bosses would care about it all.

Finally one of the leadmen, a male and an old grinder in another department, got the itch. I sure was happy, watching Ned and Jake and Steve when they finally broke down and admitted that maybe it did come from the cooling fluid, and wasn't just a female ailment. The leadman in question said the fluid had obviously been changed. He'd asked the chemistry department to please look into it. Whatever they found out, it would be fixed for all of us. So once a week or so I'd take a walk over to that leadman and ask him if they'd found out anything. He always said next week —and that his itch was getting better.

One night I had just gotten to my locker to stow my cap away and pick up my coat before punching out, when Jessie turned up and told me to go to Ned's office.

The first week, Jake, the subforeman, had come to me and asked me what was this about my name. He'd first gotten it as Losey, then my pay checks came through as Hawes, but I signed my work slips as Losey. What was my name? I said Losey was my legal name and I had been fingerprinted under that name and, what was more, I couldn't cash my Victory bonds under any other name, those the company was taking out of my salary every week. Wouldn't he please get them to put my name down as Losey. They didn't change it, although he said he'd got it fixed after the first week.

When I entered Ned's office that night it was to find a young woman waiting for me with a photographer. The young lady said that as I had once written a book called *Fashion Is Spinach* and so on, they would like to take my picture for the company paper which came out every week. It contained whatever it was the company felt we should be told about production, absenteeism, etc.; also carried pictures of people, including the great figures who'd left composing music, or acting, or whatever it was, to work at Wright's.

I told her nobody in the plant had ever heard of *Fashion Is Spinach* and that I loathed having my picture taken—but if they thought it would help the war effort, I'd give in.

So they took my picture leaning over a machine, carefully concealing my bandaged arms. I wondered then and still wonder what anyone thinks can be accomplished by concealing the bad from the American public. In the end everyone finds out the hard way and it makes them very sore. If there are hazards about working in war plants, better give it out straight and complete. If you want to keep the workers happy, make your chemistry department come through.

My shift had all gone home by the time the picture was taken, for which I was grateful. The girl told me she understood it might embarrass me when it came out, but that a few people might stare at me for a day or so and then it would be over. What frightened me was whether my fellow workers would decide there was something a little special

about me and start shying away from me instead of treating me like a human being.

Two weeks later the picture came out. The first thing that happened was Steve saying if I was going to have my picture taken, why didn't I get him in it? Then Sylvia told me she didn't think it was a very good picture.

A couple of nights later, I strolled into the ladies' room to have a smoke and found one of my favorite people sitting there, a big, lame Negro girl. One night a bunch of women had been in there complaining about their fingernails and she'd said, "What the hell da you care about your fingernails now? You're machinists, aren't you?" That broke up the meeting.

She was the first Negro woman I got friendly enough with to ask whether, in her opinion, the color of our skins didn't affect our social or working status in Plant Seven. She said it was a wonderful place to work.

"I have so much *fun* here," she said, "I can hardly wait t' come t' work every night."

This night, after the picture had come out, she looked up and said, "Well, hello. Wha's all this about y' getting y' picture in the paper? Some o' the girls asked me if I knew who you were an' I said, 'Why that's the girl I been talking to in the ladies' room.' Imagine that! Me talking to a seeelebrity!"

I laughed, and said, "So what?"

"So what?" she echoed, shrugging her shoulders. "Wha' d' they want with all that crap anyway?"

I seconded the motion and we lit up our cigarettes and spoke of more interesting subjects.

Local Politics

Rodger was single, aged about 31. He didn't look very healthy, sort of green skinned. I don't know whether he was 4F. One didn't ask the men who came in the plant, why they weren't in the army. Most of them were married with children. That was why. Some said they were 4F.

One day when I was talking to Rodger, a girl came up to him and asked him if he thought she should join the union.

"No," I heard Rodger say, but he walked her off and I didn't hear the rest.

"Why did you tell her not to join the union, Rodge?" I asked him when he came back.

"Because they'll never have a good union here," he said.

"Why not?"

"Oh, some of the fellows don't believe in it," he said. I raised an eyebrow and he added, "I'd join in a minute if I thought they were going to get one hundred percent but they won't."

The second night I was in the plant, I heard a girl from another department say there was a union shop meeting. I asked her where one joined up, and went and paid my dollar. Later a girl who worked in another section of our department arrived bringing me my union card. She said, "We want to elect a shop steward. We need some more members in this department. Do you suppose you can get a few?"

I said maybe and during lunch that night, as I sat with Jesse and one of the ex-liquor salesmen, Bill, I told Jessie, "The union is going to elect a shop steward in a couple of days for this department. Have you joined?"

"Certainly not," said Jessie.

Bill sort of cocked his eye at her and me and went on eating his sandwich. I didn't say anything to him because I figured some man must be recruiting the men.

"Why join the union?" Jessie asked. "Are you in it?"

"Sure," I said.

"Why?"

"Well—the other time I worked where there was a union, was on a paper," I said. "And thanks to that union, when I was fired from the paper, I got enough severance pay and my back vacation pay to give me time to turn around and see about how to go on earning my living some other way."

Jessie shrugged her shoulders and allowed as how she saw no reason she should join a union. Could I give her a reason?

"You've got two sons in the army," I said. "When they

come home, they'll have to have jobs and there's going to be a big depression. If the unions aren't strong, the wages will just go to hell. If we don't all join the union and keep it going while the boys are away, there'll be no strength left for the unions to fight with when they come back."

Jessie did not think her sons would ever be just ordinary workers.

"Supposing," I said, "that there is real inflation. Suppose we don't get enough money to buy our food and keep us going. There aren't supposed to be any wage raises. How are we going to make the management here feel or know we can't eat on our wages if we don't all do it together—through the union?"

Jessie looked slightly interested. Then she wiped her mouth carefully and said, "If the union gets a raise for anyone, we all get it."

"You mean, let someone else do all the work to get the raise; let someone else pay all the dues to keep the union going so it can get the raise and then . . ." I looked at Bill. He was staring at Jessie and I never in my life saw anyone look more outraged.

"We organized a union at Schenley's," he said ominously, "and . . ."

I looked at Jessie firmly folding her lips into a tight line and decided I didn't know much about organizing and maybe Bill could do better. It was during the days Steve kept Sylvia by my machine so I walked off to try my organizing ability on her. But the girl who'd given me my card had already found Sylvia. The girl had Sylvia's dol-

lar in her hand and they were talking rapidly to one another.

Later in the night, the committee man of the union, the man who was in charge of all the union activity on our shift, came around and called upon Sylvia. I heard scattered remarks, such as one Sylvia made to the effect that Steve wouldn't give her a machine. Sylvia and the committee man went off together. They had a talk with Steve. An hour later Steve crooked his finger at Sylvia, as she stood by my side, and took her over to the empty machine in front of me.

When I ran into difficulty with Janet about the union, I almost decided the quickest and easiest way to gather her in was to turn Steve on her. I still don't know whether I understand much about organizing a union and I'm sure that to a union leader it sounds a little upside down to think of getting someone from the management to help organize. But I am equally sure most of the union leaders never found themselves in a plant like our Seven with over half the workers women and seventy per cent of them either never having heard of a union or like Janet.

Janet had once joined a union in her embroidery shop where conditions were anything but fine, and wages probably half what we were paid at Wright's. Janet paid her dues to the embroidery union but nothing happened to make things better, and eventually that union all fell to pieces. Janet was what I call union-shy.

The Wright local of the United Auto Workers was just beginning to organize Plant Seven when I went to work

and union affairs there were in an extremely embryonic state. When I asked one of the shop stewards what arguments they used for organizing, he said, "Tell them they only have to pay a dollar now—just the monthly dues. When we get the contract signed, there'll be an initiation fee of at least $5.00."

Steve's pro-union talk, which he handed out quite unconsciously, was rather more potent.

For example, I complained to Steve that the amount of time we were allowed for doing certain jobs was cockeyed. Sometimes a worker would be allowed two minutes for a certain operation on one kind of gear and only one minute for an identical operation on another gear.

Steve explained to me this was because one time-study man had timed a fast operator and the other study had been made on a slow operator. But he seemed far more interested in impressing me with the fact that before the UAW had gotten a union contract with Wright's, the management could change the timing whenever they felt like it. Now, under the contract, the union had to agree to any such changes. Since the amount of bonus any department could get depended on the operators turning out more than their quota of work, doing their jobs faster than the time-study boys decided they could be done, it was pretty important to a worker's salary that the management didn't continually step in and raise the quotas by shortening the time allowed. As long as the management could change quotas at will, they could keep the bonus low. Now, if operators could gain speed or figure out ways to do things

faster on any job, they were certain to reap the benefits in cash, thanks to the union.

"But a bonus is a lousy thing anyway," I said to Steve. "Even if the management can't change the timing, what's to prevent their just deciding they won't give any bonus?"

"The management can't take the bonus away," Steve said. "It's in the union contract that it stays."

I figured this kind of talk from Steve would land Janet in the union in very short order despite her previous bad experience. I signed up a couple of girls who, like Sylvia, knew there was a good reason for being in a union without any help from me. A couple of nights later we went downstairs and sat on the floor along the wall to elect a shop steward—the person who, as our representative, would straighten out our problem with the bosses.

Rodger came and sat down and I said, "What are you doing here? You don't believe we should join the union."

He ignored me and I am not sure whether he voted for a shop steward or not. Nobody had to show a card to vote and the man we elected, none of us knowing anyone very well except the handful of people in the immediate vicinity of our machines, turned out later not to have even been a union member!

Later Rodger came up to me and said, "Look here, Liz, do you really believe in unions?"

I said you bet and gave him all the reasons I could think of.

"Things aren't exactly the way I thought they'd be here," Rodger said thoughtfully. He looked a little like those

women in the bus who had muttered about having to hang out their own wash when they saw me in overalls.

"No? That's what Bill says. He's leaving, you know. He understood he'd be getting about $75 a week within a couple of months. But you get plenty of money, Rodge."

"They told me I would get up to forty percent bonus," he said, "and what about this business of re-timing the operations?"

"The union contract says it can't be done—but I don't see what will happen with the next contract if most of us aren't in the union, do you, Rodge? I am still working on that girl you told not to join," I said. "She's weakening. She says her husband works in a place where they aren't organized but that he thinks she should join."

"I used to be shop steward for the company union at Curtiss Wright," Rodger said.

"Oh," I said.

Our conversations on the subject continued disjointedly along through the weeks.

"I don't know about this union," Rodger told me one night. "They're trying to push Slim around. They say his election was illegal."

Now Slim was the man we had elected shop steward when he wasn't in the union. And when I'd gone a few nights later to ask Slim for some union cards so I could sign up a few people, he told me curtly he didn't have any cards. And when I tried to pay him my second month's dues, he said he hadn't been given any book or something and he wouldn't take my money.

This all seemed very odd to me, although I later realized such things could happen in any vast new union organizing campaign like that at Plant Seven, where hundreds of new workers pour in daily.

Annie, a Negro woman who rode in the bus with me, and I talked a lot about the organizing in the plant. She was a former member of the United Electrical Workers.

One night I asked her if she'd seen a pamphlet the UE had which was written especially for new women coming into industry, explaining to them about the union, and with a piece in it by Mary Anderson, Director of the Woman's Bureau of the Department of Labor. She said yes and we both agreed it would be a fine thing if there were something like that distributed at Wright's new plant.

We discussed going to the local union office and taking up the matter. Annie said she thought if only the United Auto Workers could get some sort of statement about unions for new women workers from Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt it would be a wonderful thing.

"More women in the United States respect Mrs. Roosevelt than any other woman I can think of," Annie said. I said it seemed a very possible idea that Mrs. F.D.R. would write something.

One night before work Annie and I went to the local union office in Paterson and complained violently to a local officer, Jim, that nothing was happening with the union on our shift. Annie said she'd asked her shop steward four times to see about some bonus the management owed her and nothing had ever happened. I said we had a hell of a

shop steward who didn't even belong to the union and hadn't any cards so others could join, and no buttons for those who had joined.

Jim said the union had 800 new shop stewards to elect. He didn't say, "How would you like the job?" But he looked it. He got out the contract which was being negotiated and showed us the parts that had been agreed upon —the procedure of settling grievances and the rights of shop stewards and a dozen other things.

This was just after my picture had come out in the company paper. I told Jim I was about to write a book and that it was too bad the workers at Plant Seven were still so unorganized I couldn't see how a union worked. I also brought along the pamphlet the United Electrical Workers had put out in connection with organizing women. I was deliberately trying to put him on the spot so he'd hurry up the organizing at the Plant.

During Annie's and my conversation with Jim at the union office, I handed him the United Electrical Workers' pamphlet on women, saying we thought the organizing would go much faster at the Plant if something like that pamphlet could be distributed. Jim said curtly that he'd read the thing and stuck it in his pocket.

Jim bought Annie and me a coffee and then he said he'd take us back to the plant. He wanted to come in and see what went on during our shift. I said I'd certainly like to have him meet Slim, a shop steward who wasn't a union member and had no union cards.

When we went into the Plant, I introduced Jim to Slim and went off to my machine. After a while, Jim turned up and I stepped out into the aisle to speak to him.

"I want to ask you something," he said. "You seem like a person who always puts your cards right on the table. So am I."

"Shoot," said I.

"Are you a member of the Communist Party?" he asked.

"What?"

He repeated the question.

"What are you talking about?" I asked him.

"You brought me a pamphlet from UE," he said furiously. "That's a Communist outfit."

"Ye Gods," I said. "Have you ever read the pamphlet? Do you want to organize women or don't you want to organize women? You don't seem to be doing much about it here. That's all."

I glared at him and he asked me where we could meet again. I said I'd let him know.

A couple of nights later I went to Paterson before work and we went to a sort of bowling alley bar for a drink.

The UE pamphlet in question devotes about six pages to telling potential female members that there are 150,000 women in the United Electrical Workers; that the union has demanded and gotten equal opportunity for women to advance along with men to more skilled and better jobs; that the UE obtained a National War Labor Board ruling that employers pay women equal wages with men where work done is the same or similar; that UE women work on and are leaders of all kinds of shop, Labor-Management, and union committees, and also do all kinds of community work.

These true and innocuous items are followed by Mary Anderson's words to the effect that she's been Director of the US Women's Bureau for a score of years and, for

many more years than that, a member of the Boot and Shoe Workers Union; that employees need unions because "individuals cannot solve their own problems or settle their grievances by themselves" under our present system of mass production with thousands of workers in a single plant; "that collective bargaining is a time-saver for labor and management"; "that wages should be based on occupation and not on sex or race"; that she, Mary Anderson, congratulates the United Electrical Workers and the United Automobile Workers for their successful efforts in getting an equal-pay policy decision out of the National War Labor Board.

In effect, the UE and the Director of the Women's Bureau agree that by joining unions "you can win your wage rights and good working conditions." Only a set of Fascist propagandists working with mirrors could turn the pages of the pamphlet into a Red Menace.

"Did you really ever read that pamphlet?" I inquired of Jim.

"The pamphlet's all right," he said.

"I notice Mary Anderson couples the Auto Workers up with the UE at one point. Did you consider it a Communist Plot that the two unions got that decision of equal pay for equal work out of the War Labor Board?"

"Damn the Communists," Jim said. What he meant was damn this wench, obviously, and I decided I better try to get down to business but that we'd have to clear up the Communist Plot before I'd ever be able to engage in any local union affairs.

I asked Jim what the Communists had ever done to him and he said they were always wanting to follow the party line and he figured the union had its own line to follow. I said fine but didn't he think unions had to engage in politics these days and he said of course.

He kept on muttering, amid the din of the bowling, about how dangerous the Communists were. I always think this kind of talk must be very flattering to the Communists who are so few in number. Finally I asked him what was so sinister about them to his mind.

Well, he said, he knew a man who'd been one once and then he'd stopped being one. And the Communists were so mad at him they sent in a woman to break up his home.

So I said I saw now he was afraid I would start trying to break up his home but, fortunately or unfortunately, the Communists hadn't sent me into his life—all I was trying to do was collect material for a book. What I wanted to know was, did he believe in organizing women. That was all—and how the local was going about it.

He said he did believe in organizing women and sometimes Communists did have good ideas but he didn't want them barging in and trying to foist their ideas off on him.

At that point I suddenly realized there was an ice pick lying on the bar in front of me and I needed it. I asked the bartender if he'd sell me his ice pick and he said I could have it. He had several. I picked it up and said it was time for me to get taken to the Plant.

Jim sat watching me in utter bewilderment and finally he

said, "What do you want an ice pick for?" He reached out his hand to take it away from me.

"Now, look," I said, "the Communists didn't send me either to break up your home or to kill you with an ice pick. Maybe you think I'm insane because I'm so interested in unions—but I just happen to need this ice pick for my work. I need it to tighten up the gadgets that hold the gears I grind, see? If you're so afraid of me, I'll hitch hike back to the plant." He laughed then and relaxed.

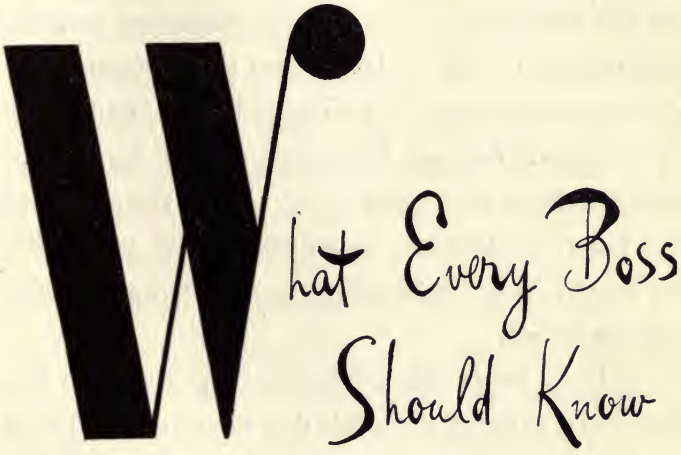
There were two good reasons Jim resorted to calling me names. For one thing, the great mistake of all time is to quote to one union what another is doing about organizing. They are autonomous organizations, even though they belong to central bodies like the AF of L or the CIO. The leaders of one union simply do not enjoy being told some other union is doing something they should or could be doing—or maybe doing it better than they are. The leaders of unions are human, just like other people.

The other thing was that Jim didn't think I knew anything about organizing nor that it was my province to go about making suggestions in a big way. And he was right. Instead of behaving as if I were a member of a union and working my way up from the bottom, minding my business as it came along, I wanted to just hop up to the top and start showing the leaders how to run things.

I am firmly convinced that the only way to get anything done is from the bottom up. Had there been no CIO and no UAW, a union would eventually have formed itself at Plant Seven anyway. Differences with one another and

the management would have made us all finally see there was no way out but to organize ourselves and iron out our problems in systematic fashion. If the union local wasn't working fast enough, the way to hurry organization was right in the shop.

Any management which doesn't agree with the Director of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, that, as she says in that UE pamphlet, a union is a "time-saver" for both labor and management, simply doesn't understand how things actually work in a shop.



To Big Business, the word management means the top management, Big Boys who have meetings and give out edicts on running manufacturing establishments. Practically no member of any top management has the foggiest idea how any of the details are carried out. The small bosses, or minor management, are in the fine position of being caught between the workers and the top management and the position can be uncomfortable to put it mildly.

Had I been the top or middle management of Plant Seven, I'd have gone to bed every night praying that the union would hurry up and get a hundred percent membership and a closed shop. Because then I would know that instead of a thousand little blithering grievances coming up all the time, boring into morale and slowing production, the union would weed things out, bring them up systematically, and get them ironed out.

I would further know that if it were necessary and important to increase production, I, the management, could rely on the labor part of my labor-management committee to bring up all sorts of ideas from the workers which would increase efficiency in a thousand ways. Employers who have smooth-running labor-management committees wouldn't give them up for any price. One of them told me that his labor-management committee tripled production and, as he put it, he could afford to double wages under such circumstances.

It's an almost impossible job to get a big new plant like Number Seven going at all in this day when you can't even hire a bookkeeper who can make checks out right, let alone a skilled labor force. If, with all the trials and tribulations attendant upon turning out the goods, the material shortages and changes in orders and what not, the workers are well organized among themselves, then the management can let the union worry about the production problems that arise along the production line itself. The workers are quite capable of solving them. If they are allowed and en-

couraged to do so, it gives them some vital interest in their work.

Perhaps if we at Plant Seven had felt ourselves a more vital part of the whole scheme, we would have also felt we were doing something to win the war. As it was, the scrap we manufactured ran as high as seventy five percent. An original order of a hundred pieces often had only twenty-five left by the time it came around for a finished grind. When unions are fully organized in war plants, this kind of thing takes a nose dive. It is quite unnecessary because scrap is due ninety percent to carelessness.

The bonus system is supposed to cut out scrap making because the scrap lowers the bonus. But that's a back-handed way to bring about something which could as well be handled by direct action of the workers themselves.

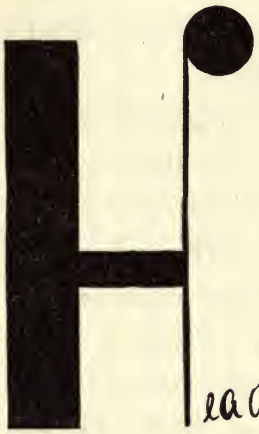
Only through the unions can such direct action be instigated, through the organization which belongs to and is owned by the workers. The most guileless person coming into any war plant finds out in three days that his interests are not the same as those of the management.

The management is in business to make money. Every extra nickel the company has to spend for wages or any kind of service to the worker means just that many less nickels of profit. That's no secret. Anyone running a business today for any other reason than to make a profit would be considered an imbecile.

Since the workers have no share in the profits, they naturally are interested in getting just as much cash for their

services as they can. So labor and management are on opposite sides.

The only thing which prevents constant open fights and strikes, is the discipline the union instills in its own members. In wartime, this discipline brought no-strike agreements. Where workers are undisciplined, where their union does not control them, where one worker cannot control another, there we find strikes. The situation would be absolutely chaotic if there were no unions.



Headaches or Heroines

When my boss, Steve, finally told me I was going to get my number changed—receive my diploma and be made an operator—I felt that same glow of childish satisfaction sweep over me that I'd seen on the face of the ex-millinery salesman. Success!

"And now," Steve said, "you better get your tools. Get a box like Rodger's—and a set of open-end wrenches and a hard hammer and a twelve inch adjustable wrench. You can get a set of Allen wrenches out of the crib, and a soft

hammer too. I'll try and buy your mike for you. They're hard to find."

So I cheerily walked into a little hardware store near home at 8:30 the next morning and fitted myself out. The hardware store man had sold me a few little things before and he always said, "How's the little Machinist today?" when I walked past his shop. He said it a little sadly, often stopping me to ask if I didn't get pretty tired. He was very helpful about trying to find me the best tools for the least money and he sold me the very last twelve inch wrench he had, which he carefully took out of a safe where he'd apparently been keeping it for some great occasion. He had some micrometers—but he told me not to buy one of them. They were too crudely made for my work. It was a very happy shopping expedition.

In the subway going up to the bus, nobody ever paid much attention to me in my overalls. Nor did they seem unduly interested in the fact that I was a woman with a tool box when I set out from home with it that night.

Slinking up to the bus, I mixed with the waiting crowd, hoping maybe nobody would see I had the thing. But the bus had been getting more and more crowded and I had to put the box onto my shoulder to keep it from being dragged out of my hand in the surge toward the door of the bus when it came. I was not in the front of the mob, so there were no seats when I got on and I staggered down the aisle, nursing the box like a baby.

"So you've got a tool box!" a man said softly.

"Oh, look! She's got a TOOL BOX!" yelled a boy.

"What's she going to do with all those tools on that grinder?" demanded a man from my department.

"Here," some sympathetic woman who'd been through this said from her seat, "give me your box. I'll hold it for you."

"Oh, it's too heavy," I said, as I stood rammed between a couple of men. "I'll sit on it," I said, hastily putting it on the floor and sinking down out of sight of those sneering male eyes.

Phew! That's one thing most of the men still can't stand. They simply won't have it. The women may come to work —okay. But *own* their own tools? Never. Tools are for mechanics. Mechanics are MEN.

I guess I was in a bad humor that night. After I got the damn tools—the tools without which I couldn't do my work —into the shop, I suddenly felt that if I had to go on having my arms bandaged any more, I'd scream. One of my fingers was all split open—and still nobody had ever done anything about changing the formula for the cooling fluid on my machine.

So I went over to the shop steward who still didn't have any union cards, and I said, "I'm very very grieved. Over a month ago something was supposed to be done about the solution on the grinders. Nothing's been done. *You* go speak to the foreman about it."

A few nights later Ned, the foreman, came around, and said he would have my machine all cleaned out and then change the formula in the water. It took hours to get the machine cleaned. So I spent most of that night "taking

walks." Those walks had become more and more depressing to me as the weeks rolled by.

The first thing you asked anyone you saw smoking was, "Haven't you got any work?"

Ninety times out of a hundred the answers were, "No," or, "I only have a few pieces so I'm stretching it out."

"If I ever thought I was coming here and SIT," a girl would sometimes say bitterly.

The worst gripe at Plant Seven was that we didn't have enough work. And nobody ever said when we'd ever get enough. What we all wanted to know was: When is this plant going to get into full production? When are we going to be able to keep busy all night?

Whenever I now read in the papers about workers complaining because they haven't enough work—through inefficiency or lack of materials, or whatever the reason—I think of those horrible nights when so many of us sat or stood idle for hours at a time.

I think the worst thing that can happen to anyone is to go to work—and have nothing to do. The fact you're being paid for not working is of no consequence.

And not having enough work in *wartime*—that's the pay-off!

The women talked a little about the letters they did or didn't get from their husbands or sons or lovers. But almost never was the war mentioned directly.

At first it used to get me down a little. And then I thought perhaps the war is such a terrible thing, nobody

wants to speak about it. Maybe they care so much, they can't talk of it.

But I don't know. There was Helene, who was absent half the time. Her mother, who was supposed to take care of her child in New York, got sick. Then Helene thought she better move to Paterson so she'd save time on commuting. When she went for help to the agency which was recommended by the management to handle child care problems, the only solution they had to offer was that she put the child in a foster home.

"He's my son," Helene kept saying, "and I want him to live with me."

So she'd be up all day trying to find a nursery school for him and, if she did find someone to sleep with him at night, she was so tired by the time she came to work, she was good for nothing. She was a failure—to herself—the management—the war effort—her son.

Actually the women were absent less often than the men, although in the locker room, the talk ran along more or less like this:

"When do you do your shopping?"

"Oh, first thing when I get off the bus. Then I usually do a little cleaning when I get home."

"When do you sleep?"

"I get a nap before the kids come home for lunch—and before they get back from school. Usually I sleep a little after dinner."

"I only had three hours sleep yesterday. Thought I'd never get the laundry done."

"I couldn't get to work last night because my husband is sick and now my kid's got it too."

"Why are you here so early every night?"

"Oh—you know—after the dishes are done and all, well, it's really time for the family to go to bed. So I come on over here in an early bus and rest here."

"And beans were 35 cents. I just won't buy them."

Night after night, the same talk—the price of food, the sleep or the no sleep—the sick children or husbands—the hours it took to get to work—the food we bought to eat at work, warmed over from the early morning, sometimes outright bad—

Can people be heroic without knowing it? For no one ever even said, "We know you're doing two full jobs, you women. We appreciate it. We can't help you. But at least we offer you this service ribbon."

Instead, at a meeting in New York about that time, a woman from the War Manpower Commission reported that the women were leaving our war plants in the midwest. "The women have no sense of responsibility," she said. "Only the daughters of ministers remain at their jobs."

But none of the other women at Plant Seven heard that remark. And if they had, I think they would have laughed and shrugged their shoulders a little maybe—and just gone on.

I sat in the locker room and a round little woman with white hair, the one who came to work early so her family could get to bed, leaned over to me and looking at my UAW button, asked, "Do you belong to the union?"

"Yes."

"How do you get in?" she asked.

"Why you just give your shop steward a card and a dollar for a month's dues," I said.

"I've had a card all filled out and my dollar with it for two weeks now," she said, "and nobody's come to get it."

"Give it to Bobby in the next department," I said.

"Of course I don't generally approve of unions," she went on a little nervously, "but in a place like this, what can you do? You know, they can move me to another crib and I don't want to leave the one I'm in. But they tried to move a girl out of one of the cribs and she belonged to the union and the union stopped it.

"That's good," I said. "Let's go upstairs. The lunch wagon will be around soon."

"The milk is so cold," she said, "it gives me a stomachache if I drink it. And the coffee is so awful—and the soup I got the other night was sour."

"We ought to do something about that."

"They ought to open the cafeteria for this shift," she said. "We need a good meal in the middle of the night."

"Well, we could at least try to get something done about it instead of just talking."

"Maybe the counsellors could help," she said.

"I spoke to the counsellor about our not having anything to sit on when we have no work," I said, "and she just told me to take it up with the foreman. I told my leadman it was a law in New Jersey we had to have something to sit on when we didn't work and he just laughed."

"What are you going to do now?" she asked.

"I've been sitting on my table for days waiting for the foreman to come along and tell me to get off it the way he did before I knew there was a law. But he hasn't come along yet."

"Maybe the union could do something about it," she said.

"That's what I was thinking," I said to her. To myself I said it's about time to stop all this thinking and do a little acting.

The bus got more crowded each week until, by the time I took my tool box to work, there were always standees.

There was no way of making sure of a seat. The bus sometimes didn't come into the terminal until five minutes before leaving time. We never knew at which point it would draw up. So, as we collected in a bunch, the whole group would surge toward each incoming bus in case it might be ours.

For some reason I never could make out, there were two

people who always got on the bus first. One was a very big, fat man. He sat with the merrymakers, who were becoming less and less merry, in the back and made loud and bad jokes all the way to work. The other was a very tall, bony Negro woman named Claudia who always tried to get the front seat.

Claudia was a "character." She looked like the gigantic Haitian women who smoke big cigars and shout things at you when you penetrate their market places on their Caribean stronghold. They cry across to one another about you in a language you can't understand and embarrass you out of the place as fast as possible.

Claudia put on a somewhat similar performance almost every night and morning—only she did it in English. Sometimes she was very polite and sometimes she was very rude. One night when I tried to sit down beside her she told me very firmly to move on. Later she turned around very pleasantly and said she only liked to sit with the men, that women gossiped too much.

Everyone who rode in the bus was quite used to Claudia's behavior. We joked or talked with her—or left her alone —depending on her mood. If she insulted someone, we all just shrugged our shoulders and we were sorry—for her. It wasn't just a chip Claudia carried on her shoulder which made her act like that, nor a deep and understandable hatred of the way humanity had treated her as a member of the Negro race. She was obviously slightly crazy.

From the start of my bus riding there had always been a certain amount of kidding about Claudia and the fat man

who always got seats. As the seats got more scarce, the kidding changed to slightly more acid comments but they were always directed at the fat man. We left Claudia out as quite irresponsible.

Naturally we all wanted to sit in the bus. We knew we were going to stand during most of our eight hour shift—and we did not want to stand in the bus. That was all.

Now and then someone would say he or she was going to the personnel department at the plant and complain. Maybe some of them did.

There was a soldier in uniform, a private, who started riding the bus. He said he had to go to work in his uniform until he was fully discharged.

One night the soldier turned up in civilian clothes and there was quite a fight between the fat man who always got a seat and the soldier and some of the other men who were getting tired of not sitting. The fight took place in the crowd as the bus drew up into the station and most of us paid little attention.

The next night the soldier turned up in uniform and stood in the front of the bus by the driver. I had adopted a policy of withdrawing immediately from the crowd if I didn't happen to find myself right in front of the bus door when it drew up. I waited until everyone got on and then I got on and sat on the step of the bus after the driver shut the door. It was drafty and hot at the same time, but it was a seat.

This night the soldier was practically standing on my head and I heard him making an arrangement with the bus

driver to be picked up the next night on a certain corner before the bus came into the terminal. I asked him how come he had on his uniform again and he snapped crossly, "Ask the management."

The next night when the bus came, I found myself in the part of the mob just in front of the door so I held my ground, knowing that I'd be pushed on in time to get a seat. When the bus door opened, out stepped the soldier saying, "Now no pushing. Form in line. Form in line."

You might as well have asked a bunch of cattle to form in line. We surged forward as usual. The soldier took his stand in front of the bus door with his two elbows up and across the entrance and he started dropping an elbow on one side to let someone through on the right and then on the other to let someone in on the left.

I was hurled forward from behind and the only reason I didn't get hit in the head by an elbow was because I was too short and scrambled in under his arm. When I got on, I saw Claudia about three seats down and behind her Annie, my Negro friend. I sat down by Annie. Claudia, just in front of me, pursued her policy of sitting in the outside seat, holding the inside one for someone who didn't gossip.

She was going on at a great rate. "That soldier hit me in the head," she said. "He's got no business hitting me with his elbows. Who told him to stand there anyway? I'll go to the personnel . . ." Nobody paid any attention to Claudia.

When we were all in, just as mystified as Claudia at the

soldier's behavior, the soldier got on and planted himself by the driver, facing us.

At that moment Claudia shouted out, "What's he doing here anyway? Why isn't he in the army. He's no good. He's in 4 F!"

"Shut up," said the soldier.

"You got no business hitting me," she screamed.

"Shut UP!" he shouted.

"Who told you to start pushing me around?" Claudia yelled.

"SHUT UP!" The soldier screamed back, starting down the aisle.

And then the next thing I knew the soldier had his hands wrapped around Claudia's long neck.

"She wouldn't dare talk that way in the South," a pasty-faced little man said loudly.

Some of the men began to rise slowly from their seats.

"Oh stop oh stop oh stop," I found myself muttering, holding out my hands to catch Claudia as the soldier pulled her up and forced her back over my lap.

Suddenly Claudia gave a great push and she and the soldier swayed up in front of her seat. Then down she went onto the floor with him on top of her. A couple of men hauled him off and, as Claudia rose to her feet gibbering like the mad woman she was, Annie leaned over and took her by the arm. "Shut up and sit down," Annie said clearly and firmly. Claudia shut up and sat down.

For the first time I found myself counting the Negroes in

the bus. There were seven. They sat in silence, looking straight ahead.

The soldier took his stand by the bus driver. He exhibited his torn jacket. "She'll have to pay for that," he said loudly.

Nobody agreed or disagreed. For the first time we rode silently to work, not as war workers, but as Negroes and Whites.

Later in the evening the soldier came up to my machine in his coverall and said, "Will you come and testify about that nigger? She had a razor."

"Yes," I said. "I'll come and testify."

"There'll be race riots in this plant," he said.

"Why?"

He leaned nearer me. "White men are going out with Negro girls," he murmured.

"I'll come and testify," I said. "I'll testify about Claudia —that she's mad and dangerous. I'll testify about you—."

"Never mind," he said, and walked away.

Later Annie came and stood beside me and I asked her if the soldier had asked her to testify.

"Yes," she said.

"What'd you say?"

"I said yes. That's all. She ought to be fired," Annie went on. "She'll just make trouble in the end."

"How about him?" I said.

The next night Claudia wasn't on the bus. The soldier was—but he was back in civilian clothes. When the bus drew up and the door opened, a big policeman got out. He

took one look at us and just walked around the front of the bus and stood, watching us heave and push and shove. When the bus was full, the big policeman turned and walked away. We never saw Claudia again.

Pretty little Janet and Common Woman union member Liz got their numbers changed the same night. We were the first learners in our section to be made operators, and it happened to us faster than to anyone we'd ever heard about.

To say that hell broke loose is to put it mildly. The hell was of a particularly wenchlike variety.

First all the wenches in the section who hadn't had their numbers changed, the Learner-wenches, came around and made sure it was true that Janet and I had been elected. They congratulated us. After that each wench started throwing wrenches into the machinery of production according to her own particular brand of wenchery.

Janet and I now had to make our quotas every night, turn out the required amount of work as laid down by the

time-study boys. That's the price you pay for getting to be an operator.

Her second night as an operator, Janet had a job which was timed so fast nobody had ever been able to fill the night's quota on it. Steve told Learner-wench Nelly, that once-so-jolly little Scotch woman, to give Janet the credit for the work Nelly was doing so Janet could fill her night's quota. Nelly didn't have to fill any quota as a learner and if she'd been an old operator she'd have handed over extra credits to anyone who needed them because that's how we workers help one another along. But Nelly had never heard about all that. All she knew was her number hadn't been changed and Janet's had and she wanted her number changed too. She refused to give Janet her credits.

Steve came up to me with sweat pouring from his brow and asked me if the other girls didn't like Janet. I asked him how it really did happen Janet and I got our numbers changed before other people who'd been in the plant longer than we had. He said because we did our work quicker than the rest so I suggested he go over and prove that to Nelly if he could. He had no proof to offer except that of his own eyes.

Learner-wenches from other departments began filtering in to see if it was true we'd had our numbers changed when they'd been there longer and were still learners. It was true. The Learner-wenches returned to their departments and pretty soon their leadmen began stamping over to ask Steve why the hell he'd changed our numbers before he had to either do it or fire us.

I was working happily along in the midst of all this hullaballoo, paying strict attention to my grinding and laughing quietly to myself because I had always thought there was no sense to the number-changing business and this proved it. I didn't know whether my number had been changed because Steve and I laughed at the same jokes or because I'd told him I'd buy my tools when I got my number changed or because I'd had just one timed job since I'd been in the plant and made my quota on it. I was very tired of hearing all the jabber about number-changing and I hoped Janet's and my speedy advancement would crack the whole question wide open and provoke the laying down of some kind of rule on the subject.

Suddenly my secret pleasure was interrupted by Janet arriving by my machine with tears in her eyes. "Jessie won't speak to me," she said. "Gee, Liz, this is awful! I didn't know this was going to happen. I wish he hadn't changed our numbers!"

I looked over at Jessie and I kept right on looking at her from then on for two nights. The first thing I saw was that the calm, slightly weary, rather pathetic expression which Gentle Jessie usually wore had evaporated. Her mouth was all snarled up and I didn't have to hear the words she was spitting out at Rodger to know they weren't gentlewomanly. Jessie was definitely Not-So-Gentle.

"Maybe this isn't going to be so funny after all," I thought. I watched Rodger sneak a word in now and then between Jessie's hisses. Time marched on and a few hours later I noted that Jessie wasn't hissing any more. Her

mouth was straight and grim and she was speaking right out of it almost like a normal, outraged human being. Learner-wench Jessie had been at the plant much longer than Operators Janet and Liz. Whatever unpleasantly wench-like traits of character she'd shown, she'd always done her work efficiently.

I could hardly wait to get to work the next night to see what the Not-So-Gentle Jessie was going to do. I expected she'd go to the personnel and, as the outraged mother of two sons in the armed forces, demand Steve be fired and Janet and I demoted. I supposed the net result would be she'd get her number changed and go charging about the section from then on speaking only to those who remembered to say please every time they opened their mouths and casting the seeds of dissension among wenches for blocks around.

But, by Jupiter, what Jessie did that night was to join the union!

She was standing by her machine when I arrived and talking quietly to the union committeeman for our shift. She didn't look or act calm, weary, and pathetic. She didn't snarl and hiss. Her mouth wasn't grim and straight. She just looked stern.

Later, when Jessie and the committeeman had finished being stern with Steve, Jessie's number was put in to be changed.

By and large, I wasn't surprised that the growing thirst for action on the part of a bunch of war workers who hadn't enough work to keep them busy resulted in fighting

on the bus. Something of that nature was rather to be expected.

The thing I had *never* expected to see anywhere at any time was the transformation of a Gentlewoman into a Womanworker. Obviously miracles can happen.

In the beginning of this book, I said I was both hopeful and terrified about the future; about men and women cooperating to solve their common problems.

When I left Plant Seven to write this book, terror was predominant. I was sick. People kept telling me I'd worn myself out; the work had been too hard. And I'd just tell them that anyone could do the work but that women were going to kill themselves trying to do the war work *and* the housework *and* look after their children. The war job itself is no problem.

All the time, however, I really kept thinking about the fight in the bus. That fight had come so naturally and spontaneously, simply because none of us who rode in the bus had the energy to get everyone to go together and say that

we insisted upon some system of entering the bus in the order in which we arrived at the station.

In Paris they used to have thick little pads of numbered papers hanging on a post at every bus stop. When you came up to wait for a bus, you took the top paper. When the bus came everyone got on in the order indicated by the slips they held. It was very simple.

That fight in the bus was not a fight between a Negro and a White. It was a fight between two very unbalanced people. It need never have happened. It didn't prove there would be race riots at Plant Seven. It just proved those of us who rode in that bus weren't thinking or acting as a group. We also should have taken steps to see who or what was making the soldier brood about race riots.

The fact we couldn't get together about an event which was dreadful to all of us, nor solve a simple problem like bus seats, certainly didn't bode well for any getting together to solve the problems of running the American Home. That is why I was sick when I left Plant Seven.

Nor could I, as a wench—a potential woman—keep from being irritated by the little happenings at the plant which showed a traditional disrespect for female abilities. I certainly recognized the absolute necessity for men and women getting together; working together. For if we didn't work together, we couldn't produce those airplane engines. There was no way of *not* working together. Yet we wenches were continuously treated like children; never asked or helped to grow up.

Yes, we were children. Someone decided what clothes we

should wear; we had counsellors to look after us as if we were in prep school; men mustn't swear in front of us because we were too special to take it; we were bad girls to use our brothers' tool boxes.

So we retaliated in childish fashion by crying; by sulking and not speaking to one another; by telling tales and complaining to foremen or other bosses. Or we used the age old weapon of sex, baffling, bewildering, and browbeating the males around us.

The original attitude of many of the women like Jessie toward any organization boded ill when added to the theme song of so many men: Will the men ever get their jobs back? The men would look intensely embarrassed when they found themselves in a minority at a union shop meeting. The whole set-up had the makings of a split between the sexes and a general weakening of the organization so necessary to decent cooperation.

I would not accuse Jim of not wanting any wenches to mess into his union affairs. But I have been told by women in several unions that very often when a female comes of her own accord with offers of help on organizing, she is accused of being a Communist. And this cannot help but suggest to one's mind that perhaps it's the women who aren't wanted very much, since Red-baiting is usually just a cover for something else. The fact that it's so often a cover for union-busting doesn't make it easier to take when union members are found using the tactics of their worst enemies!

Just because it was so clear in the plant that men and

women must work together; that they must work in an organized fashion on production; that they must unite to work with the management through the union; it made it more painful for me to see the millennium had not arrived. But it also made it clear that the millennium *can* arrive.

Men and women *can* work together smoothly—because a lot of us did. Men and women of one category—workers, for example—can work with men and women in another category. That is being done through labor-management committees. If Management and Labor don't have to feud all the time, Clubwomen and Womenworkers don't have to feud.

Since Jessie finally came around to joining the union, believe me, there is reason to believe any wench will join some mutual benefit society. So the thought that it is possible for almost all of us men and women to work together to re-organize the running of the American Home isn't so fantastic, for all our present splits.

The fascination of the plant was that in comparison to anything else I ever saw tried, it is a lightning method of teaching people the usefulness and necessity of cooperation. Nobody who stays over a month in any big mass production plant can fail to get a glimmer of what can be accomplished by people working together.

I wish that all the citizens of the USA could be drafted and given at least six months in a big plant. If we could all understand what it takes to produce an airplane engine, we'd be a long way toward understanding what it takes to produce a generation of fine citizens. It takes planning—

over-all planning; full cooperation of all those engaged in the business; attention to the newest discoveries and methods; willingness to cast aside outworn methods and practices and put in newer and better ones; strict attention to the welfare of all the people involved. All these things are necessary to produce a good airplane engine efficiently.

All these things are necessary to produce a good American Home—where Man and Woman may meet and live as equals, happily, and the children grow to their full size and strength. If it's worth organizing people so good airplane engines can be produced, surely we can take time to do a little organizing to make our homes hit on all cylinders.

Part 3

Who? What? Where? When? How?

h, Sweet Mystery

A woman I like very much told me my "progressive" ideas for running the home seemed perfectly sound to her —but that there was no use bringing them up.

"I love the United States," she said, "but it is a very backward country."

Later I discovered she, when editor of a large woman's magazine, had once made a writer cut out a lot of material from a piece because, she said, the readers of her magazine had twelve year old minds. And, a couple years after that, she told the same writer the readers had nine year old minds!

Personally, I have a great deal of confidence in the twelve year old mind—and even in the nine year old. The trouble with a lot of people is, their minds are centuries old. They are so extremely wise they assume nothing will ever happen this year or next year or within another hundred years. They are the ones who once said it would be wonderful if everyone could read but of course it was silly

to talk about public education. "Idealistic," they call such talk.

Without feeling at all idealistic, I would like to say loudly and clearly that, whatever the present faults of any woman or man, I think by and large human beings are fine and can accomplish anything. Men and women are wonderful, and quite capable of molding a more ideal world, even though women do cry.

Idealistically women should cut out crying and realistically we can do it and we better do it if we're going to be women of the world, taking our places beside the men.

To be a woman is very embarrassing. There is surely no woman who thinks at all who hasn't discovered this.

It all begins when a child is born. Nobody on earth yet knows exactly why or how the mother had the child. Sure, the authorities know an egg came down and was fertilized and grew and popped out and there was a baby. And the fact that civilization is advancing may be measured in one respect by the publication in *The Readers Digest* of a piece called *The Truth About Menstruation, Condensed from Good Housekeeping.*

It was boldly printed in this piece that unless a woman has some basic physical disability, she does not need to cry and carry on and lie down once a month as in the old days. She may continue her activities, including gym classes, as usual. This information must have happily affected the lives of millions of girls and women.

But the article also noted that there is something called ovulation which is when the female of our species lays an

egg. It is generally conceded it's at the moment this occurs that a gal may get pregnant. But nobody knows just when it occurs and every female is supposed to find out for herself by feeling a slight pain from ovulating. She may only get the pain once in three years. So any woman who wants really to understand about pregnancy has got to keep it on her mind pretty constantly. How one is supposed to know the ovulating pain from a simple case of indigestion was not explained.

Furthermore, most doctors find all this quite embarrassing to discuss with women patients and if you ask, as I did lately, whether or not a little violent sexual intercourse can't actually bring on ovulation, doctors hem and haw and say maybe it can. This leaves us women just about where we started, except for going ahead with our gym classes.

It is fair to say that nobody understands women, since nobody understands how their insides work. And to go through life a mystery, not only to everyone you know but even to yourself, that's enough to make anyone a Problem.

Probably because of being Problems, women are treated in a very special way. On the one hand we are set up on pedestals and on the other we are put in the position of servants. One day we are protected from the big rough world by men being forbidden to swear before us. The next we are cursed at for not keeping the house clean.

Some women who get bawled up and cry often, are also rich, and they repair to psychoanalysts who try and get them in a condition to take what they get and like it. Most psychoanalysts apparently assume that the USA is a very

backward country, and the best solution is to adapt yourself to it and not wear yourself out trying to change anything.

There are some psychoanalysts and psychologists who now write books suggesting that it might be easier to adapt civilization to people than to force people to adapt themselves to a given system. However, in general, it usually develops that a psychoanalysed woman's trouble is that she didn't have any strong man to guide her. Her solution, like that of the psychoanalysed Lady in the Dark, is to relinquish her independence, if she has any, and become as contented a cow as possible. If it works out well, she ceases crying and moves happily through a full sex life—which is supposed to be enough to satisfy all her demands.

My solution to the problem of female tears is quite different. Ideally—after the war and all that—we should have government research funds—millions if necessary—to find out about the functioning of the female's insides. Then the results of the research should be spread so we can all know exactly how, why, and when we have babies. Women would cease worrying about this major problem and the woman-hours released would certainly be sufficient to get at least a chicken a week into every pot in the country.

When the insides problem is solved, women will cease to be a mystery. When women have ceased to be a mystery, an important hunk of female psychological problems will cease to exist and a big step toward stopping the crying will have been taken.

Meanwhile, what is the use not admitting that wherever there are men and women, there is sex? Why not stop trying to make a problem out of this for the female as well as the male?

For example, when a man puts on a uniform, he is not supposed to cease being a man. His sex life is normally considered to continue. He can't get pregnant but he can get social diseases, so medical protection is doled out to him.

But when a similar problem comes up regarding women —who may inadvertantly get pregnant while in uniform as well as out of uniform—the hesitation about it being right to give them adequate protection is deeply implanted in our culture. It is so deeply implanted that it was possible for certain groups to create a furor over the mere suggestion that the women in the armed forces were being given contraceptives.

The disgusting war against the WACS took the form of an argument as to whether or not contraceptives were being given out. Because of public opinion, because parents were fearful of their daughters being given concrete knowledge about contraceptives, many young women were stopped from joining the WACS. Official denials that contraceptives were being given out did not help much.

The controversy, which must come up sometime after the war and finally be settled once and for all, is whether or not all women in the USA, as soon as they reach maturity, should be carefully taught all the facts of life as well as the use of contraceptives. In public school systems today,

mental hygiene is supposed to be taught without going into sex. That's poppycock and clearly impossible.

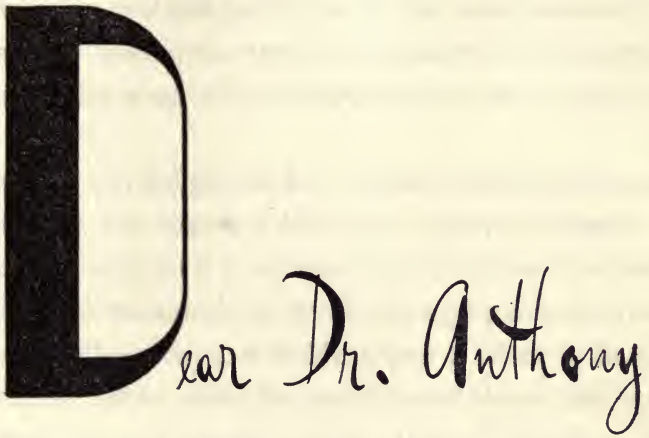
A sound knowledge of the use of contraceptives does not mean immorality. Since the truth about menstruation has been printed why not take the next step—sex education and contraceptives for everyone? Then, whether or not we women have learned to distinguish an ovulating pain from indigestion, at least we won't have to be in a nervous frenzy all the time wondering whether the results of normalcy are to be pregnancy.

Certainly the Equal-Righters could go to town on this program at once. They would find themselves striving for something the vast majority of men and women in the USA want. Instead of being an isolated little group, they would become a focal point for pressure on a basic female problem.

As long as this particular reason for sadness and tears is not attacked in a big way, each woman has to figure it out for herself (with the help of a friendly doctor, clinic, or the man in the corner drugstore). We continue to be a mystery and something of a psychological problem.

However, there is so much to be done on less moot questions, that my immediate solution to the crying problem is for women to get so busy, they have no time for thinking about themselves individually. A burst of activity, if coupled with a serious attempt to get the men to realize the backward condition of the home and help get things straightened out, would result in women being treated more like adults and adults cry but rarely.

The more we women work to make it possible to exercise our right to be socially productive (for money or for free) outside our own homes, the more we solve the problems that are keeping us tied to those homes, the more we will grow up. The more we grow up, the more we will be treated as full-fledged, adult citizens. The more we are treated as full-fledged citizens, the easier it will be for us to exercise our right to be socially productive. And so on in a spiral ascent toward a broader, brighter, fuller, tear-free life.



Exactly what can we women get so busy about that we won't have time for tears; will have time for living and breathing and the attainment of our full size and strength; become women of the community, nation, and world? What are we doing now and how are we doing it?

Once I had a good friend called Amanda. She was married and had two children and lived like many clubwomen or Riches-Not-Bitches. She did very useful work helping get money for running the private school her chil-

dren attended. She also had time for tennis and bridge and plenty of vacations—a good life. She loved her husband and her children. And she loved her new house about which she had quite a fight with the architect who designed and built it in the early thirties.

She wanted a house which was simple, on so-called modern lines, but she wanted to put into it a great deal of very beautiful old English furniture, some elegant French crystal chandeliers, some Chinese furniture and some handsome Japanese screens. All of these things she had acquired traveling over the world with plenty of money in her pocket. Most of us would have liked to have all those things.

The architect, being modern and having his eye on the future, wanted to design and build a house, and have it furnished so it could be cleaned from top to bottom with hoses or by opening taps or turning on blowers or suckers. He wanted to make a house which was practically self-cleaning. That would have eliminated many of the beautiful non-washable, hard to clean objects Amanda had collected. So she ordered and got a normal, present day house which she ran efficiently with only three servants, including the nurse.

Amanda began running out of money when her mother died. Her husband lost some of the money his father had left him. So Amanda decided to take a job. She was pretty good at what she did and earned around $5,000 a year, which, with what her husband earned and what was left of the family fortunes, made it possible to run the house

and children as usual. When the war came, Amanda, being a fine and patriotic woman, thought the way she earned the $5,000 was not necessary or in line with winning the war quickly. She gave up the work and started looking for something more useful.

Her husband got a war job which kept him traveling half the time. The family manse was on Long Island, about an hour from New York.

Amanda thought she might go in a war plant. On the other hand she thought she could be more useful by taking a social service course and doing community work. She took the course. She reduced the servants to one maid-of-all-work.

The maid-of-all-work decided she'd take a war plant job just as Amanda finished her social service course. There weren't any more maids to be had. The family income had been sharply cut by Amanda giving up her paid work. So instead of doing a full sized social service job, Amanda found herself entering her home to do all the shopping, cleaning, cooking, and child care.

Because she and all the other women in the community always had one or more servants, they'd never thought of planning full-day school programs for their children. If the mothers weren't around after school, the maid was always there to give out cookies and a smile and see the house wasn't torn down by an excess of misdirected energy on the part of the children and their friends.

So when the servants left, Amanda and practically all the other mothers in the community, found that what with

all the housework and having to be ready for come what might after school, there was no time for anything else at all. Amanda couldn't go out at night and leave the children alone and most of the time her husband was busy doing his war work in Washington or other cities in the USA.

The last time I saw Amanda she was still a very self-contained, efficient person, but with a little pallor and grimness settling in around her once very beautiful gills.

Amanda told me how she was leading her life and muttered she often thought she might go insane. I asked how her husband was and she said she really didn't know since she never saw him. After that we tried to talk of pleasanter topics.

The case of Amanda pretty well sums up the present fate of thousands of former good workers in the community, of good Clubwomen. They are now Forgotten Females and due to the servant problem some of the former She-Wolves and Professionals are also Forgotten Females. Many servantless Mother She-Wolves and Mother Professionals who are now allowed to be irregular at their work because it's a war, are going out of their jobs with a bang when the peace comes unless the depression is so severe as to bring back a plenitude of servants.

But if any of the women who have now lost servants accept them again as a solution after the war, they will all be in the soup again eventually because the servants aren't going to want to be servants. The first chance they get, they'll clear out again. If we put things together properly

after the war, there won't be any depressed servant class to hire. Anyway, servants don't make a happy home.

One ex-She Wolf I have known for many years, Lucinda, has a husband who is earning a good salary and she is able, even in wartime, to keep a nurse for her two children. She does all the shopping, cleaning, and cooking which she found she could do in half a day. (Much less time, she keeps saying, than any servant she ever had could do it in. When she says that, a grim look comes over her face which bodes ill for any servant she may have in the future.)

This now Forgotten Female was, in her She-Wolf days, a liberal and a progressive. She believed we should struggle to get the best for everyone and keep on struggling no matter how long it took. Now she believes there are people in the world like her nurse who'd rather be servants than be anything else. She says the nurse never wants a day off, never knits or reads or sews, just loves the children all day long. She says the nurse is happy in this life and wouldn't want any other life.

She is sorry the nurse doesn't know how to handle her oldest child and never thinks of playing games with her or doing things the child would like to do. The nurse just sits watching the child, and is sorry when the little thing gets all fed up with trying to figure what to do next without any directions or help and so yells and screams. The child goes to school two-thirds of the day—but there are those hours after school. Plenty of time to get bored and furious.

Lucinda knows she herself is not well-equipped by tem-

perament to spend long hours with children. And she knows all about how well-trained people can deal with children. But she's just letting things ride because she's convinced herself that there are many people who love being servants more than anything. She thinks they are finding this out in war jobs and will come back of their own free will to knock at Madame's door when the war is over.

Apparently Lucinda has forgotten she once believed in education. She doesn't believe anymore that if her nurse had been given thorough training in handling children, the girl would prefer working regular hours in a nursery school to being tied in someone's home 24-hours-a-day. She doesn't believe that the nurse would be any different if she'd learned that by working together in certain ways, the majority of the people in the USA, including the nurse, could have better lives and not have to work 24-hours-a-day —or even ten or twelve hours a day. Lucinda just doesn't believe the nurse would have been interested in education.

I hope, Lucinda dear, that your nurse leaves your bed and board, because you are an intelligent woman and you know how to organize things. And it is only the nurse which is now keeping you from entering that struggle to make a better world—a world where you wouldn't have constantly to clean, do dishes, do laundry, cook, and watch your children develop the same neuroses you're getting.

If Lucinda and her husband went before Dr. Anthony and told the truth, the story, although spoken in slightly different words, would go as most of the other tales he hears.

"My husband is almost never at home," Lucinda would say. "I have no social contacts. I used to get them through my work when I was a She-Wolf. I could go from that work to my husband and children feeling satisfied with my contribution to society because I was making a definite contribution, in laboratory work.

"I had time to spend with my children and money to hire good people to care for them while I worked. My husband and I had much to talk about, my work and his work and the children and the house.

"But now, Dr. Anthony, I can only listen to my husband talk—about *his* work. He isn't interested in my work—housework. And we must talk about the children—especially because the oldest one is such a problem. But there's no way to solve this problem in our community. The school is badly run. There is no organized after-school activity.

"And now my husband seldom comes home. And when he does, I wish we could go out—maybe go away for a vacation together. But we just argue about the children. And I cook and clean—and he sits on the porch and drinks. What shall I do, Dr. Anthony?"

The Husband might then say, "Look, Dr. Anthony, I don't know what's come over my wife. She used to be interested in me and my work. She used to look alive. Now she's pale and sick looking. She doesn't really listen when I talk. She has nothing to do but take care of the house and the children—but the house isn't very clean and the children are a mess. She says she can't get any meat—and she never was much of a cook—so the food's bad.

"I'm frankly glad of an excuse to be required to go out of town half the time by this war job I've taken on. Something's come over my wife—she's cold. She's disinterested."

When the story gets bad enough and too hot for Dr. Anthony to handle, it sometimes reaches the public press. So and So is in Reno getting a divorce. A baby was found wrapped in a blanket on the steps of the Public Library. Two children, ages six and eight, were found in the subway station. They will not talk except to say they don't want to go home. He was arrested for beating his wife. It wasn't a race riot, just hoodlums, boys of fourteen and fifteen in gangs, breaking windows, stealing.

With most people in the USA, the story never gets too hot for Dr. Anthony to handle. It never even gets hot enough to get to him—and anyway, we know he couldn't handle it.

There was Janet working in the plant. She'd have been working peace or war, because she and her husband wanted to get enough money to set up housekeeping for themselves. They didn't want a room in his mother's house.

Let's suppose they get enough money to set up for themselves and Janet gets pregnant, maybe before they've saved any money at all. Then when the baby comes Janet can't work and her husband can't make enough for all three of them to have a home, so back they go to mother. Then comes that mother-in-law trouble you always hear about on Dr. Anthony's program.

Let's suppose, on the other hand, that the husband gets a

raise without Dr. Anthony's help and they get a home alone and Janet gets another baby. She was so very pretty and sweet and now she gets so tired taking care of two babies. Janet gets so tired that she's no longer sweet and she certainly isn't pretty anymore. Her husband loves her and she loves him and they both love the children but that doesn't keep Janet sweet and pretty or make a happy place for her husband to come home to, a clean place with no dirty diapers in the bathroom and the supper all ready on the table. The baby's probably sick just the night Husband had a row with the boss and there's no supper ready at all because Janet couldn't even get out to buy any food. She was scared to death when she had to go to the drugstore for some medicine, didn't know whether to leave the sick baby all alone and take the older child with her, or maybe leave the older child and he'd fall out the window the way you read they do in the papers sometimes.

No, Dr. Anthony, you can't solve Janet's potential problem nor Amanda's. You can't make sure things will be better by a word of advice like why not leave your mother-in-law or perhaps you did not really love this man when you married him or perhaps your husband would do the dishes for you now and then if he realized how much work you had to do so don't lose your temper.

Dear Dr. Anthony: How do you solve *your* servant problem?

Sauce for the Goose

Here was Amanda on Long Island with two school age children in a private school; a large house rather far removed from other houses but still within walking distance of a good twenty other families; no servants, and almost no husband. What did she finally do? How did it all come out?

First of all, in one sentence, Amanda put her children in the public school. In a small community she felt she could use her time and efforts in the interests of everyone by trying to make the public school work better rather than continue the small private school which was always in danger of sinking from lack of funds.

Amanda carefully considered the surrounding families and chose a few with children the same ages as hers. Mrs. Halsted and Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Green were all in exactly the same fix she was in. They had to do all the shopping, cooking, cleaning, and some of them did the laundry. They didn't want their children to have a cold picnic lunch every day at school but the the only other solution was to

cook hot lunch for them every day at home. The public school had no hot lunch program.

After some effort, Amanda convinced four women it would be a good thing if each one of them made lunch once a week for all the children of all of them. More food to prepare, sure, and more dishes to wash, but it meant four free noon hours per week for the Forgotten Woman. As Amanda arranged the program, she craftily told the women concerned that if only there were hot lunches served at *school,* the children could eat there and wouldn't have to rush so at noon hour.

"Maybe, if there's no other way out," said Amanda, "we could organize all the mothers in the school who are interested and cook the lunch there in shifts, three or four of us a day. We'd each of us only have to do it about once a month."

Naturally, at this point, Mrs. Smith said Amanda had never seen all the school mothers. They had simply never attended a Parent-Teachers meeting and beside that, Mrs. Jones was always trying to control everything.

"Well," Amanda told her, "maybe nobody ever called them together to discuss finding a way of only having to make lunch at home once a month!"

But, thought Amanda, before we get to that, what kind of a routine can we arrange for after-school? It turned out there were about ten children Amanda's kids really cared to play with in the afternoon.

Mrs. Billingsley said flatly she would not have a swarm of children around her house ANY afternoon, not even

once in two weeks. That made Amanda realize why little Susy Billingsley was always hanging around Amanda's house; so Susy was kept in the group anyway. Then there was another kid whose mother worked, so the group wouldn't have any supervision at her house, and they decided to just add that child on, too, and her mother, unlike Mrs. Billingsley, was so grateful, she said she'd give a supper party once a month on Saturday night.

Amanda got thinking there was no reason she should cook dinner every night of her life. So she worked out a little scheme of regularly exchanging dinners with certain people once a month, or once in two weeks, or even oftener.

Naturally, all was not smooth. Mrs. Hanger's husband was so outraged by the idea of actually knowing ahead of time he was going to eat with Amanda once a month, he and his wife almost had a divorce over the idea. (In fact three years later, Mrs. Hanger did get a divorce and married a bachelor who felt no woman should have to cook dinner every night of her life.)

Mrs. Black, after the children came to her house, refused to have her child associate with Clarinda, Amanda's daughter, because Clarinda swore constantly (in a mild way) having picked it up from her father. It had always seemed to Amanda and her husband they couldn't very well punish the children for doing what they did themselves and they both said damn quite often, especially in those days. Amanda offered to withdraw Clarinda from the group (thinking she'd have to start another with children whose parents also swore) but Mr. Black stepped in at that

point and said: "What the hell, let Clarinda stay!" Mrs. Black was pretty mad and said damn herself, which eased the atmosphere.

Mrs. Jones observed to Amanda one day that she'd reduced her food shopping tours to three days a week—but she wished she didn't have to go that often. Amanda and she then tried shopping for one another once a week. It worked, which was a miracle, but miracles do happen.

After a good many months of using her free afternoon and lunch hours in prodding the school parents to action, Amanda got them to the point they decided they'd have hot lunches at school—or else. The domestic science teacher stepped in and said she could oversee it and the older girls could just as well cook the lunches for classwork credit. So that was that, except for getting a dishwashing machine, china, cutlery, tables and chairs out of the Board of Education.

Since none of the Board was a parent of school children it was quite a struggle. During the fuss most of the parents decided they'd better arrange later to change the members of the Board.

Meanwhile, the Boy Scouts were persuaded to run their troop meetings right at and around the school and someone got a Girl Scout Troop and a Camp Fire Girls tepee, or whatever it's called, started at school. The volunteer leaders were overworked, so the newly elected Board of Education decided, after several hard shoves and kicks from the combined parents, that they'd pay for one male and female recreation teacher to supervise the after-school activities.

Now by this time Amanda was pretty well embroiled in all this fixing—and life was not exactly dull. But she got so she talked of nothing else day and night—and that was the way with the other mothers who had worked to get the hot lunches and were really working hard to get a recreation program for the children so they'd have some organized fun after school and not always be just disappearing or going to the movies and then playing gangster or insisting upon wearing their hair in long, uncombed, tangled bobs like great movie stars.

When Amanda's husband came home, he and the other husbands would sit and smoke and drink and talk together and leave the women to discuss the children. So finally Amanda walked in to her husband one night and she said, "I am going to leave you and you can take care of the children."

"What?" he said.

"I'm sick of it all," she said. "I'm going back to work—any old work. You try and figure out how the children are to keep busy and not just gamble all the time after school. Let Mrs. Jones's husband try and figure out how she's ever to have a moment to breathe, with a child two and another four and another seven. Let HIM start learning about nursery schools for a change."

"What's a nursery school?" Amanda's husband asked disinterestedly.

"Something your next wife is going to start wanting when her first child gets to be two. Join the National Association for Nursery Education [in care of the author of this

book in care of the publisher of this book] and find out for yourself."

"Come on and get ready for bed," he yawned.

"Why do you suppose Clarinda kept wetting her pants until she was five?" Amanda demanded. "Why does she still suck her thumb? Why does your son always raise a rumpus about his food?"

"He needs a good beating," he said.

"Yeah, so he'll turn into a nervous wreck like you!" snapped Amanda. "If I'd had a nursery school to send the children to, I would have had trained people I could consult about why they wet their pants and all that. If our public school here had a few people attached to it who were trained in child psychology, you could go and find out why your son throws his food around and chews his fingernails."

"Oh, for heaven's sake," Amanda's husband said, "our parents never had any of this stuff for us. What're you always talking about hot lunches at school for? Nobody ever had to be around to see we got organized to go fishing or play games after school under the bridge. What is this supervised after-school stuff you're so hot about?"

"What did you *do* after school, *under* that bridge? Just what you'd like your son to do?" Amanda demanded meaningly.

Her husband blushed, but snorted, "Schools for children only two years old! Fiddlesticks!"

"Listen," Amanda said quietly, "do you still love me at all?"

"Don't be a fool," he answered softly. "You know how

I feel about you." Amanda was crying. "Look, probably I'm being awful. What is it you're getting at?"

Amanda wiped her eyes and put her handkerchief away. "If you care about me," she said, "and about the children, would you read this book called *Life and Growth* by Alice Keliher? It's about adolescents like Tommy. He's getting so difficult. And then read *The Story of the Eight Year Study*. After that we can talk a little—maybe you'll see what's griping me—what I mean by Progressive Education."

Her husband looked at Amanda out of the corner of his eye. "Are you sure all this isn't just something you cooked up so you can have some time off—and maybe go back to work some day?"

"There's an awful lot to be done before I can ever get back to work," Amanda said. "Cleaning and cooking and all that, you might say. I was thinking even, since it's going to be such a long time, if you'd read *Babies Are Human Beings,* (by Aldrich and Aldrich) and this one by Susan Isaacs called *The Nursery Years,* you know you were saying we might have another baby, but honestly I can't undertake it without some help. Somehow I can't go through having another child who might get temper tantrums like Tommy at the age of one year without our ever knowing why—or another who'll never be able to go to a nursery school when that would be the best thing for him."

Amanda's husband got up and put his arms around Amanda but she backed out of them. "God," she said, "if only we could do something about the cleaning and cook-

ing and laundry! If we could at least start planning something about them, I'd feel better. Why didn't we let Sam design this house the way he wanted it to be, self-washing and self-cleaning?"

"Gee," Amanda's husband said, "I'd forgotten that idea. But look, we'll be able to have some servants again some day. I'll make some more money after the war."

"Listen," Amanda said, "I'm tired of this after-the-war-after-the-depression-next-year-everything's-going-to-be-better stuff. You and I are just the same as everyone else or will be soon. We're using up all the money we put away. It's about gone. So what have we got if you'll just be realistic? We have a house that's horrible to clean, two kids in the public school and we could have another one coming up, in fact I think, well, anyway and besides that, we have exactly $75 a week in earned money. We're better off than a lot of people, but not much, and I am just any old housewife and you're just a guy who's got to support his family while I am nurse, chambermaid, and cook. I am not at all sure it's ever going to be any different."

If Womenworkers with children would take a few days off to arrange a little cooperative living, there would be less absenteeism from that time forth. If Womenworkers can get their union locals going on nursery schools and after-school programs and hot lunches and penny milk, a lot of people's lives will be a good deal different—and much pleasanter.

Why not start thinking this over *before* you have that baby, Janet?

Could Happen Here

A few months later Amanda's husband arrived home in a very bad mood. He'd come out on the train with Mr. Jones who said Mrs. Jones was driving him mad about something called Nursery Schools. He had tried to convince Mr. Jones his wife was right, and, he told Amanda, Jones was just a stupid fool who didn't even care to find out what was best for his children, much less how many hours a day his wife spent in the kitchen.

"He won't even read a book," Amanda's husband said. "Say, I was just thinking today. Remember that camp where we visited the Hammersley's in the Adirondacks? Where they had the main hotel building with the central dining room and then everyone had houses sprinkled around all with kitchenettes. We cooked there sometimes or the food was brought over all cooked, remember? Now I've been thinking. If things were built properly in the country you could have a group of houses like that. There'd be the central building with the dining room, probably a

cafeteria, then you could go over and haul your own meals back if you wanted to eat alone. Remember everything was always hot or cold, all the right containers for carting it around and keeping it? And the rooms just got cleaned up by the servants."

"You wouldn't have to have all those servants," Amanda said, "if the houses were built and furnished for self-cleaning. Anyway, there won't be all those servants. But people in places like that are quite well-paid and good at their jobs. If you hired them like human beings, for certain hours and decent wages and all, it would be as good as any other job. Lots of people like to cook and most of the dirty work could be done by machines, dishwashing and all—no old-fashioned cleaning."

"I suppose it would be rather expensive, maybe," Amanda's husband said. "After all, you keep saying we'll never have more than $75 a week!"

"It wouldn't matter so much if things were just efficiently arranged," Amanda said. "It's much cheaper to buy food in bulk, and in a plan like yours it could be sold at cost, as it were, sort of like the Government Restaurants they set up for the workers in England. The houses in the group could be different sizes. Aren't we fools to live the way we all do?"

"On $75 a week? Yes!" he exclaimed bitterly. "It's killing you."

"Oh, I'll survive, if there's any hope ahead," Amanda said. "In your housing project will you please fix it so there's a baby nursery attached to the main building so I

can leave our small one there from time to time after he-she arrives?"

"You bet!" Amanda's husband shouted. "You don't think it would hurt him, do you?"

"Him or Her," Amanda corrected. "Him or Her would know the nurse or nurses there just as well as us. And wouldn't it be a Godsend if him or her were sick? There could be isolation spots for the older ones, too."

"Yes," he interjected, "and a nursery school where the child grows to be—quote—a happy, healthy, sturdy, co-operative human being—unquote."

"You're getting to sound like a book," Amanda said.

"Parents have been proven by studies in clinics to be the worst people to give their children habit-training," Amanda's husband intoned dramatically. "The emotional tie-up between the parent and child makes it nearly impossible for the parents not to drive the children crazy while trying to make them have their bowel movements on the potty—too soon. Hence the value of the nursery school, or words to that effect!"

"I certainly agree," Amanda said, "but where did *you* find it in print?"

"Oh, I picked up that book by your bed. A very very interesting book that. To think how I used to worry whether I was wrong not missing Tommy when you sent him away to that wonderful camp!"

"You'd better not go at this too hard," Amanda said, "or you might get indigestion. Look, in the housing project we have some underground or covered route so the kids can

get to the nurseries in bad weather. Gosh, if there were really such a place to live, then I could have a job again. I'd rather, you know. The kids can be okay without me being around their necks all the time."

"I wish you'd get another job just as soon as you can," Amanda's husband said. "You are getting to look a little, a little . . ."

"Like a housewife?"

"Well, you look much better since you got all wound up in this school business. As I see it, we can at least have the lunches and the after-school stuff and a nursery school in the public school without building a housing project. That leaves you enough time to take a little exercise!"

"Why don't you make a drink?" Amanda suggested.

"I don't know if that's recommended for prospective mothers by the best authorities," he said.

"Everyone can't be perfect all the time," Amanda smiled. "That obstetrician I tried this time told me I mustn't drink any alcohol at all. Why, I told him that was my only pleasure when I was pregnant!"

"Darling, really . . ."

"He finally said he guessed one drink a couple of times a week wouldn't hurt me or it," Amanda said hastily. "So go on."

"Don't you ENJOY being pregnant?" Amanda's husband asked. "I should know by now, but I guess I never asked you before."

"I love children," Amanda said, "but I don't want to be

with them *all* day, every day, any more than they want to be with me all day every day."

Amanda's husband nodded his head.

"I love babies," Amanda said, "they're so little. I wouldn't mind being with them all day, really, if I didn't have to do all the housework beside. They don't get bored with me, so long as they get fed and cuddled enough. But the nurse in your housing project will love babies and she'll be a good cuddler. I wouldn't have to do all the cuddling."

He nodded his head and broke in, "Now about being pregnant . . ."

"I suppose the day will come when it isn't shocking to say that being pregnant is just an awful bore," Amanda said. "It's what you have to be to have children, so that's that. I wish I could have a regular outside job now. It would make the time pass more quickly."

"When we get the housing project, you'll be able to," said Amanda's husband. "Meanwhile, I will cheer you up with some alcohol. Maybe when we get the project we won't need so much of that either!"

Did you Ever See a Dream Walking?

You think I'm dreaming? That Amanda should finally be able to live in a well-run horizontal housing project in the country and Janet will find its vertical counterpart in four square city blocks; that they should have easy access to community restaurants or hot cooked food to eat at home; that the homes should be self-cleaning; that Amanda and Janet should have some freedom to grow and work; that they and their husbands and children should have leisure to play and really live together; is that just a dream?

Of course it isn't. We have already had many public and private housing projects which have provided cheap space and light and air for thousands of Amandas and Janets. To have more of them and to have them better is no dream. It's a very practical possibility.

It's no idealistic notion that we can have nursery schools and after-school programs and hot lunches and penny milk for all the children in the United States. Thousands of them already have had these things.

Did you ever see a dream walking? Well, I have. When

a dream starts getting into motion, it often seems more like a nightmare.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, I dreamed of a country at war, fighting to make a better world. I saw it was today's children who would have to conduct the affairs of the better world of tomorrow, the world their fathers are fighting to get for them. And I saw, in my dream, the provision of all the public funds necessary to assure the well-being of today's children, tomorrow's adults.

I saw a little placard in my dreams, it dangled before my eyes night after night. It read:

If anywhere in this country any child lacks opportunity for home life, for health protection, for education, for moral and spiritual development, the strength of the Nation and its ability to cherish and advance the principles of democracy are thereby weakened. Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

I aroused myself from my dream with those words engraved on my heart and I set out to help Franklin Delano Roosevelt and all the people who were charged with the care of the Nation's children. I set out to help them make sure the words are turned to actions.

As the dream began to move, it was wonderful. I wasn't just dreaming in my bed alone. I was going ahead as one of a great crowd; of professionals in health and education and religion and welfare and housing; of Clubwomen and Riches-Not-Bitches and She-Wolves and thousands and thousands of just plain mothers, Womenworkers and For-

gotten Females; we were all going ahead together to see that no child lacked what he needed.

"This is going to be easy," we thought. "We all agree. We all want it. The President wants it. It's just a question of organization."

As the dream was taking its first steps, I went to collect some information on just what parents should tell their children in wartime, from a professional who had a lot of material on the subject. She told me to go ahead and read the material from England—but not to quote *her,* please. She was going to be paid by a big magazine for setting down her ideas and so they mustn't be scattered around free. I was stunned, but just for a minute, because I'd never dreamed there could be many people like that, people who exploited the needs of children to get money for themselves.

Things got less and less dreamy as we child-carers organized a meeting where representatives of over a million people came together to present a skeleton plan to the Mayor of our city, a rough outline which all those working on the problem had agreed was the way to start providing care for our children in wartime.

The Mayor read the plan and said: "The worst mother is better than the best nursery school. Certain groups are trying to exploit the war for their own private purposes. Let the Police deal with juvenile delinquents. There is no need for after-school programs to keep children off the streets."

Some of the people who worked on the plan then came

around and suggested too much fuss was being made about child care. Better break up this committee that called the mass meeting. The Mayor doesn't want the masses overexcited.

By now this idea of getting proper child care was well out of the dream stage. From then on it was a nightmare —and a fight.

You would think the heads of all those departments in Washington who are charged with some aspect of child care would have been glad to work with any group that was in contact with committees in twenty six states, glad that in all those states there were thousands of people who would urge action—thousands of people who would call upon their Congressmen to vote for appropriations to provide the nursery schools and the hot lunches and the milk and the afterschool programs which were to keep our children strong and let their mothers turn out the goods to win the war. But—

One day I found myself sitting at a meeting chaired by the head of one of the largest child welfare agencies in the country and with representatives of The United Parents Association, the Veterans, The Junior League, and the Catholic Church. The chief of a Government bureau dealing with children came in and made a speech on how much her department needed funds. Then she left.

Whereupon the chairman of the meeting said the object of this luncheon is to start a lobby to get those funds. I asked whether, if the groups represented decided to work together for the children, it was understood we would lobby

for funds for *any* government department working on child care, because *all* the departments needed funds.

The answer was that, as far as the chairman was concerned, we were to lobby solely for the one department in question. We were to get money only for that department and for that department head to spend—not money for the care of children. If the department in question couldn't care for the children, then to hell with them.

I went from that meeting to supper with a girl Trade Unionist. She said, "Look, the big chief of our union has got to understand what this child care thing means. *He's* got to start getting the locals back of it *from the top.* You get Mrs. Rich-Not-Bitch to go and speak to him."

"No, no, no," I said. "You should do that from inside the union, from the bottom up."

"No," she says, "you can get it done better from outside."

Then my head began to ache very hard because the last time I had been in Washington I had noted with interest that the real reason the Chief of a certain government department paid any attention to what I was saying was because he found out we had union representation on our child care committee. But I wasn't sure whether that union representation would result in just another resolution at a national conference—or in the millions of postal cards which would really prove the union members—who vote—wanted money spent for child care. Union representation and resolutions make government Chiefs interested. Postal cards make them act.

After the United States had been fighting the war over a year, figures showed that less than a third of the children of working mothers were getting any of the special care they needed. People working on child care committees from Seattle to Florida to Maine to California all had the same bitter experiences. The Federal Government could hardly move on the matter because one department was cutting the throat of another for fear someone else would get all the money for child care. State Legislatures wouldn't appropriate money. Local governments became involved in local child care battles on what group would control the state or federal money for child care if there ever was any such money to spend.

We females, Clubwomen, Riches-Not-Bitches, She-Wolves, Womenworkers, Forgotten Females, who had first dreamed and then started to fight to have the children provided for, we were tired and despondent after a year's work and little to show for it but a nation-wide increase in juvenile delinquency. "What good did our work last year do?" we'd ask one another. "Why go to Albany and Washington and sign petitions and call on Congressmen? Why argue whether the unions should get going from the top or the bottom or at all? Why try to cooperate with government agencies who are not really interested in child care?"

Poor, tired fools that we were, concentrating on *last* year. Because of what had been done the last year, the Governor of our state appropriated two and a half million dollars for child care the next year—and the unions were right in there fighting to make him do it, along with the manufac-

turers and heaven knows how many other groups who usually don't work together.

Even though it was appalling that, after a year of war, the federal government itself admitted most of the children who needed care weren't getting it, still, some of the children were getting something. And whereas during the first year of war there were no bills put up in Congress calling specifically for money for care of children of working mothers, in the second year of the war a bill went in calling for several hundred million dollars.

Oh, yes! Several government agencies tried to spike that bill—because they weren't to get any of the money. And the Congress went home leaving the bill lying on a table, but they did hastily appropriate a small sum to tide things over until they came back to Washington.

Sure, plenty of people make a political football of the children's needs. But we got *some* money for the kids in spite of them. And once you've gotten some, it's easier and easier to get more and more—always providing you try harder and harder!

Imagine how the government departments will fight one another to get hold of the money for bigger and better housing projects! Imagine how the private companies will fight to stop the government from building any more public housing. But we'll get the housing, unless we'd rather scrub floors and do dishes and cook for the rest of our lives than fight for it. Of course, it may take a good many years to get the housing.

But I know, because I had that dream and walked

through that nightmare, that money can be gotten for nursery schools and other things children need which can be attached to the present public school system. Money can be gotten for those things within one year of the time it's demanded when the demand is made by enough people in a loud enough voice.

The Body Beautiful

I've talked about getting better houses and better education; about cooperation and a better nation and Big Things like that. Now I want to consider a little, personal thing—very personal—the body beautiful.

How can all women have the body beautiful? Why aren't they all beautiful?

For years we women have been sold curtains and rugs, extra furniture and quaint cigarette boxes, for our homes. We have bought those things on a vast scale in an effort to gild a faded lily. Our houses, being unsatisfactory, the solution was to fill them so full of trimmings that the ugliness of the lines wouldn't show. That this mania for complicated interior decoration added immeasurably to the

cleaning problem is obvious, but since servants, whether hired help or married help, exist to clean, why worry?

In the same way the absence of any cheap and easy method for brightening up the female body made decorations like lipstick, dangling hair, and fancy clothes a necessity. The more the female body fades, especially in the period of a woman's life just prior to the final fading, the more heavily is her body decorated.

It must be that the object in all this is primarily to fool the decorator herself since nobody else is ever under any illusions as to whether the hair has been dyed, the cheeks painted, or the extra flesh tucked into a corset.

Deception or not most women who shun these superficial aides to beauty, look just as awful or even worse than those who do. It is practically fatal to female charm to keep the mind pinned on housekeeping and child care to the exclusion of personal appearance. Life gets awfully dull for those wenches who never get to see a male eye gleam when they enter a room.

In my privileged character as a She-Wolf, it was not only given to me to spend all my days with women who spent most of their days being made lovely to look at, but I had access to every kind of aide to the body beautiful myself. I had massages, spent time and money keeping my face and hair in trim, and had as many of exactly the kind of clothes and hats and shoes and other accessories as I needed to make people—males and females—look at me and keep myself amused. I could always look at myself in

the mirror without shuddering even if I never perceived any signs of fatal beauty emerging.

By the time I'd finished my slow dive from the Ivory Tower to the sidewalk upon which I landed when I left Plant Seven, I was physically pretty low from doing at least one and a half jobs. And something very funny happened which awakened me to all I had left behind.

As I sat, all skin and bones, jittering away about that fight in the bus and the women who were calmly ruining their health doing two full jobs in wartime, a kindly Rich-Not-Bitch called upon me. The conversation went something like this:

RNB: "I hear you are all worn out. I have an idea. I—you know—we are not as young as we used to be."

Me: "No indeed."

RNB: "I don't want to interfere but—I know the war effort is very important and all that."

Me: "Yes."

RNB: "It is very important. Did you hear about Helena Hopkins?" (A well-known writer of satiric pieces.)

Me: "No."

RNB: "Well, she had a frightful nervous breakdown a few months ago. It was awful. She wouldn't even go out of the house. So everyone—we all—went one after another to suggest something—you know—psychoanalysis or a trip to Mexico, and all that happened was we all came away drunk!"

Me: "Oh."

RNB: "And then a month later I saw her and she was entirely cured. She looked wonderful." *(Pause.)*

Me: (raises her eyebrows).

RNB: "Now don't misunderstand me. I wouldn't want you to do this, of course. I know you couldn't stand it."

Me: "No?"

RNB: "She simply went all by herself and took a course at Elizabeth Garden. There we all were trying to fix her up and she just went all alone and got fixed up."

Me: "No!"

RNB: "Now—did I ever tell you about me three years ago? I was a wreck. I couldn't go out of town. And I simply couldn't go to Elizabeth Garden."

Me: "Certainly not."

RNB: "But I went to Eliza Rubblestone. And I had a course of exercises (only of course I don't like them so I didn't do many) and massages. I lay for an hour in the sun room and then I had a bubble bath. They're simply wonderful. You feel just like Cecil B. de Mille. Now I think you better go to Eliza Rubblestone. I will phone and arrange everything. I know the war effort is very important—and it is rather expensive—but you better start at once. Tomorrow. I will arrange it all. I will phone you. Goodbye."

Me: "Goodbye."

When my husband came home, I said, "Look here! You went and had lunch with RNB and told her I was worn out! Now she says I have to have bubble baths! BUBBLE

BATHS! I suppose that's going to solve everything. I should go and take bubble baths!"

My husband began to laugh and he kept right on. Between laughing he said why shouldn't I go and do it? Something had to be done. I couldn't just go on lying on the floor kicking and screaming forever. "Anyway," he added, "You haven't had any exercise in three years."

I reflected I used to have at least three massages a week which kept my blood circulating at no expense to my energy. So finally I managed to smile out of one side of my mouth—and I phoned Eliza Rubblestone, thinking that certainly if I could get some sun—artificial or otherwise—on me after those months of living in the dark, it would be bound to do some good.

When I telephoned Rubblestone's, they kept handing me from one person to another and everyone wanted to know how much weight I wanted to lose. Finally I screamed that I weighed 98 pounds and that if they were any good, they could make me *gain* weight.

When they finally let me in the door of the Rubblestone Salon—after looking me over as if I were some kind of bad fish—they decided I could have a little exercise and massage and sun but that I wasn't strong enough to stand a bubble bath!

(This aroused my curiosity and I finally insisted upon having one at the end of my course of twelve of each of the other things. Perhaps it is just that I don't enjoy feeling like a Cecil B. de Mille movie but the soap bubbles, which taste quite sweet, rather frightened me. I felt that had I

been about five years old, I would have adored them and I mean to give my son a bubble bath for a treat some day. A bubble bath is a third of a tub full of hot water crowned by a full tub of suds which rise high above your head. There is an electric business which makes the water go swishing way up your legs while you sit or try to lie. If the water went faster, it would be rather like being towed, feet first, back of a motor boat. But it doesn't go fast enough so the sensation is rather wishy-washy and not nearly as sexy as might be expected. Or maybe—well, in any case, many people like bubble baths but not me.)

After one session at Rubblestone's, I felt strong enough to go to the doctor, thinking if I wasn't strong enough to stand a bubble bath, I better get to the root of the matter. After that medical session, I had to purchase about $7 worth of codliver oil, vitamin B, and heaven knows what not although, you understand, there was nothing wrong with me. I was just worn down to 98 pounds and had a temperature of 100 degrees which I had apparently been cherishing for weeks while working, having failed to admit I had a cold.

Since I hadn't stood up straight for about five years, or since having a child, the exercise girl and I had quite a struggle to get my spine looking less like an arch. The massage girl and I had long talks about the mental state of Les Riches Bitches who came in. She said, "Maybe you think you're nervous but most of *them* cry no matter what you say to them."

Then I'd lie in the sun room on a long casket filled with

sand and think for an hour. I thought how one night in the plant hospital a guy was complaining about a cold and I asked him why he didn't take some ascorbic acid pills—concentrated orange juice as it were. The nurse said she thought everyone on the night shift ought to take them since we never really got any sun or saw the light.

And I thought what it would be like if all the men and women in war plants, could spend an hour every day exercising or being massaged and lying in a sun room. I thought that if we war plant workers could all do that and get our vitamin pills every night, most of the absence due to sickness would disappear and we'd win the war that much faster.

I went to see the wonderful woman who taught me to wash my face with soap and never use a powder base, and never never never to have my face massaged. She and I tried to think whether there was a single Rich Bitch we knew who was happy. We couldn't think of one.

After that visit I kept thinking of all the girls and women who read all the stuff on how to get your face into condition and keep it that way and how they never have access to any really expert, professional advice by someone who could examine their skin individually and honestly tell them what to do for it most cheaply themselves. I thought of all the nonsense they are inundated within stores by beauty saleswomen who don't know a darn thing!

I realized very sharply that one of the troubles with the nation is that most women have absolutely no idea what the best is like so they are satisfied with what they get. Once

the editor of one of the famous fashion magazines told a friend of mine she wasn't sure I was a good dress designer, but she thought I'd make an excellent rabble rouser. I have always cherished those words.

But although I know a great deal about body-beautiful building, I can think of no quick way to make all the women in the USA realize what they are missing that the Rich Bitches have. Yet I know from experience that in these days and probably forever, it will be just as important for a woman to have access to the best of beauty aides as to the most efficient houses and housekeeping aides and the best methods of child care.

It has been said a thousand times and will be said a thousand more, that health is the basis of beauty. To have good skin and a well-built body and carry the body well, one has to be healthy. There is no use having access to a good hairdresser or a good milliner or shoemaker or dressmaker if your hair is all musty, your muscles flabby, your spine bent and your shoulders round. If your body is in good shape, it doesn't make much difference what you put on it.

There are many group medical plans in existence. Even the American Medical Association now admits it is useless to combat a wide expansion of this type of mass medical care. There are sunrooms and gymnasiums and beauty parlors and hairdressers galore in the country and the attendants who actually do the best work, even in the fanciest of them, are Common People who'd rather deal with beings more human than most of those they now care for.

It isn't very difficult nor expensive to plan a combination of medical care which supplies vitamins as well as exercise rooms and beauty parlors. A lot of skin specialists and doctors still refuse to admit the value of massage, exercise, and many of the products the best beauticians use. But there are plenty of medicos who understand psychology enough to know that if they can't find anything wrong with the mechanics of a persons insides, there are still physical things to be done which will make that person feel and look better—and be better able to function.

A girl came to me a few months ago from one of the white collar unions and said her group would like to organize some kind of classes on make-up and clothes because it was so important for the female members of the union to look well at their jobs. I told her I would be glad to experiment with the clothes class but only after provision was made for the girls to learn to stand up straight and to keep standing up straight—after the doctor and the exerciser had started their work, in other words. I never heard anymore about the plan. I'm sure a very large proportion of the members of any woman's organization would not bestir themselves attending to their health and posture even if it were put as a pre-requisite to their learning how to dress better and get their make-up on right.

Knowing as fully as I do how really important it is to women that they look well—whether for business, snobbish, or sex reasons—I can account for the failure of most of them to do something about it in only one way. It can only be that the women of the USA believe that these things

are only for the Rich Bitches. The Common Women of the USA, whether or not they have ever inspected a Rich Bitch, have seen beautifully groomed females in the movies. So they know what the body-beautiful looks like and they know it is not just an accident of youth.

That is one reason I hate the results of the educational system of the USA. It serves to make most American people thoughtlessly accept things as they are; makes them accept lack of medical care, vitamins, sun lamps, massages, food, clothes, houses, and education.

All Americans, however, do not accept lacks so easily. Some of them have learned somehow, by informal, private education; by reading books and magazines and newspapers; through some clubs and unions:—that it's possible for everyone to have all the good things the Rich Bitches have. It's up to those Americans to start spreading the word around quickly if Mr. Wallace's great century of the Common Man is to get started within the next few hundred years.

Oddly enough, in these times of hue and cry, it is not my belief we are in the midst of a revolution in the USA nor that any revolution is just around the corner. Real revolution is a very fine thing for everybody because it means a better life for more people.

If, at long last, the majority can't get what they have coming to them by peaceful means, they get so angry they rise up and grab it. If people get so angry at having a country run so that all they get out of life is a living wage, they finally rise up and take over all the means of production. They decide they wish an economy planned to supply the needs and desires of everyone and not run haphazardly and in such a way that only those things are produced which make a good profit for a few people.

It is quite possible, now that the machinery for having an abundance of everything is advanced to its present if imperfect state, for the people who run the machinery to turn out for one another plenty of whatever they all want.

This of course wouldn't suit the present owners because it would then become a matter of an overall plan for producing everything the people of the country want and running things under a central system. This would cut out individual enterprise, which is another name for individual ownership, which is another name for letting a few people decide for themselves how much of what goods will be made at what price and with a sole regard for the profits to be reaped.

A planned economy, run under central control, with the object of turning out what the majority of people need and want, and no regard for profits, is called Socialism. It is not to be confused with Fascism which also plans everything centrally but with *no* regard for what the majority of the people need or want and with a complete regard for profits.

As time goes on, fewer and fewer people turn pale and trembly at the mention of the word Socialism. It is nothing but a system whereby everything is run for the benefit of everyone and owned by everyone, instead of a system where almost everything is run for the benefit of a few people and owned by those people. That's certainly sensible and innocuous!

Eventually we shall have some such system here, as even most of those so horrified at the idea, now admit. All the fuss and fury about having us, the people, take over such basic things as electricity so that private electric companies can't put any price they choose on it, and so that it can be

sold to everyone for just what it costs, are the shadowy beginnings.

The idea that there is something *wrong* about the people of a country going into the business of providing themselves with their own electricity at cheap rates is still being spread by the few individual companies who make a big private profit out of reaming the people of the USA. But the people are beginning to catch on. They don't like to be reamed.

If we had a thoroughly good educational system, *everyone* would quickly learn that it's idiotic of them to allow electricity to be sold at exorbitant rates when, by just running it for ourselves, we could reduce the price. This, of course, is why the Chambers of Commerce and the male Rich Bitches don't care to have the majority of the people get too well educated. That is why it is quite necessary to continue one's education on one's own, during and after leaving school.

It has been proven, in these years of war, that high taxes can be paid and it's easy to see that the tiniest part of what is being spent for war would suffice to provide all the education all children need. The majority of people still need better housing and better education for their children even though the principle of public education and public housing have been admitted. It is certainly the right of the majority of the people in a democracy, under capitalism, and without being accused of having socialistic ideas, to ask and receive more and better housing and education.

But when we ask for these things, especially mass edu-

cation, we are repeatedly told we are Reds, or Communists, or trying to establish Socialism. That is why I think it's rather cosy to know socialism wouldn't be such a bad thing *if* we were asking for it while, at the same time, we are able to point out that we are *not* asking for it. Our critics are just drawing a red herring in front of a tax raise. Don't let's get caught in that trap.

We women are caught in enough of a trap as it is. It is literally impossible for most mothers to function in anyway outside their homes. It is torture for most of those who try to do it. It is impossible to do it easily without servants.

How shall we proceed to help ourselves in an orderly and unrevolutionary manner?

With a lot of women it can start over the back fence with the simple sharing of household and child caring jobs. A great deal of this is being done. The war has forced it on us. It's a small thing, a good thing, but not good enough. For one thing, it's a purely female cooperation and, as such, cannot get very far.

The next step has always been women getting together in groups and working more or less privately among themselves to get whatever they want. These groups attend a lecture or go to the theater, mostly, because not much can be accomplished on a broad scale in a purely private way by a limited number of women alone.

It's when the female groups decide to enter into public action that we need a reconsideration of the tactics used. Whether you are trying to get a park in the town, more money from the state for education, or Federal appropria-

tions for nursery schools, it is necessary to consider that men vote, too.

True, we women have been relegated to our housekeeping and child care for years and years. In turn we have often simply slammed the door in the men's faces if they expressed an opinion on female problems. Men are usually seriously consulted about houses because that's a major investment of the money they earn. Also when a major investment is made in higher education—what college is Billy going to?—the men are given a chance to speak up. They also help settle the matter of whether Susy is going to college, but usually don't get asked for an opinion on where she should go.

If a husband expresses an opinion on some minor problem of child care, he is very frequently told he knows nothing about it. He normally only gets drawn actively into the situation when the child gets so out of hand, the mother decides it needs a good spanking or severe talking to. That makes a fine situation between the father and child. Most of the time the child might as well have no father.

It is also sublimely true that with all the fuss most women make about cooking what their husbands like, the poor guys have to turn into regular demons to actually get what they want. If they show any neutrality in the matter of food, they constantly get served those horrible messes invented by woman's magazines to keep women experimenting with advertised products.

If the husband complains about the house being dirty or his socks full of holes or his shirts badly laundered, the

wife usually misses all her opportunities of explaining to him about the impossible conditions of her work. She just says she has too much work to do, or more likely bursts into tears.

So we females are guilty of having cut the men out of helping with our problem. And when we come to pressing for public assistance, we clap on our hats and rush off to call upon Senators hoping as much to bewitch them with our charm as actually to talk them into doing what we want for a sound reason. We almost never can get a guy to come along with us on our crusades because he doesn't know what we're really trying to accomplish.

Not withstanding all this, the city council or the state legislators or the boys in Washington are absolutely terrified when the girls get going. Once when seventy-five of us women went to the State Capitol on a trek to impress the legislators with the dire need for funds for child care, I heard one of them say as he looked at us, "Oh God! When those women start coming up here, they usually get what they want."

Often we do. After about seven years of treks to Albany, New York State women finally got some state financial help for local kindergartens. I believe if we persuaded the men to help us, the time and energy involved in all these things would be greatly lessened. I don't believe we will ever get what we need for the children until the men come along with us. They'll come along more easily on any housing plans because that's a traditional male interest which could be whipped up into quite a fury.

You see by now what I'm getting at. We women have got to come out of our houses and engage in Local, State, and Federal politics if we are ever to solve our problems. It is fun to engage in politics if it doesn't stop with pulling a lever in a voting machine. It is horribly educational and amusing, as well as infuriating.

The most fun is calling upon your governmental representatives to tell them what you wish they'd do and ask them what they're doing about it. I well remember a young woman I met one night at a very small child care meeting. She'd been to call upon her State Representative. Her eyes were big and round and she laughed hilariously as she told about it.

"Here I am," she said. "I've never been out of the Bronx, you might say. For years and years I've been voting for Mr. Eve to go to Albany. I never saw him. So we go over to see him, a bunch of us, on this child care bill. Well—would you believe it, he can hardly speak English! He said he'd never heard about child care but he'd look into it. I bet he can't even read! Imagine—I was afraid to even go and see him. Why, he's an imbecile! I might as well be up there in Albany myself."

You meet up with quite a few representatives like that, and you never have to vote for them again. And you meet up with some fine people and some very very smooth ones who simply love you and children and everything you love. That is, you meet the latter if you can get to see them, which is hard. They always try to foist you off on a secretary. If it's an organization that wants to see them—a

large organization with a lot of votes—well, they finally see you because, after all, you can vote them in or out.

You need these guys not only because they vote on the bills, but because they can get other people to vote yes, too. But they need *you* more than you need *them* because without your votes, they can't keep their jobs. It is a gratifying sensation to feel, no matter how rude they may be (and they can be plenty) that if you really want anything and get a lot of people behind it, you have the whip hand.

The nicest thing about politics is that the minute you mingle in it, you see that Democracy could be made to work. The will of the majority of the people can turn into concrete action. I do not say that a minority will not resort to any means to thwart the majority. But on questions such as child care and education, if the majority keep their minds on what they want, they can get it because they aren't trying to upset the system. Although powerful monopolistic groups see the eventual danger of allowing the mass of people to get proper education, they aren't as scared of mass education as they are of cheap electricity.

Those who are against us use very astute tactics to split us. They know that women are divided into many categories and that women's organizations are similarly divided. They know all about women snobs, singly and en masse. The lads who don't want the bill passed are very charming and wise when they explain the reasons for your organization not backing A's bill but instead backing B's bill. And vice versa, until untangling the problem begins to seem insurmountable and no bill gets any backing.

If you just start at the beginning and read the bills, you can figure out for yourself which is best. It is very important in political action to try and keep simple and direct. If you get involved in all the minor machinations of the professional politicians, you're lost, to the professionals' great pleasure.

The professional legislators, administrators, department, bureau and division heads, all of them, whether local, state, or federal employees, are paid *by us* and working *for us* and it's their business to do what we want. If we agree it is a vital necessity to get life arranged so women can function fully and children be educated to the complete extent of their capacity, let us also agree to stop pulling our punches and start coming right out in the open. The day of the Common Man is never going to arrive so long as the Common Man adheres to the rules laid down by the status quo boys.

Of course the reason so many of those who wish to accomplish something look to the unions as their White Hope is because unions are the only large groups in the USA where men and women are organized and can act together. The unions have many problems on their hands these days; production problems which must be solved in cooperation with the management; wage problems which must be solved to assure the members a decent standard of living, come what may.

Many union organizers and thousands of active male members have gone to the armed forces. The remaining leaders and active members are half crazy trying to cope

with immediate industrial problems. Other people now in the unions have got to get to work. Everyone who can join a union has got to join—for these are the only organizations in existence which have any kind of apparatus for bringing real mass pressure to bear for anything.

The lowliest union members, Jessie, Janet, and Bill, must somehow get a sense of their own importance! When the chief of the United Automobile Workers is listened to in Washington, it is simply because Janet and Jessie and Bill and millions of others are standing behind their elected union chiefs. The union chief is of absolutely no importance by himself. He only exists because Janet and Jessie and Bill allow him to, and yet they do not feel the terrific sense of power they really have. They do not exert that power for their Common good. They have the power to get anything they need.

"Anything" includes the best of education and housing which will set us women free. But the tendency to set up all kinds of separate women's committees in unions is a very bad one which will serve to split the pressure in the end. There are no special women's problems.

If union women attempt, alone, to work out programs to solve their *traditionally* special problems, they will fail. If the men continue to attempt, alone, to cope with the industrial problems facing the union, they will fail because industrial work is no longer solely a male job.

The women must learn to bargain collectively and work cooperatively on production plans with the management.

And the men must work along with us in the solution of our basic home problems or there will, in the end, be no homes worth mentioning in the USA.

The situation of married working women is wretched. Until it is solved, we women will never be able to concentrate one hundred percent on traditional union problems such as wages and hours. We will let the men down in a crisis because instead of having time to consider and act with them, we'll all be rushing home in a bus to see whether Johnny is alive still and throw together some food so the family doesn't starve.

As to the best means of action for all those who wish to act together and can't do it through a union, there is one kind of organization which takes in male and female, that's the parent-teacher group which is organized in all progressive schools and many public schools. Here the women usually run things but the men are not excluded. They exclude themselves, chiefly through boredom, the same reason a large number of women exclude themselves.

The meetings of such groups are anything but boring when the parents and teachers really dig into the problems of the children. It is the right, not to say duty, of all parents to dig thoroughly into these problems. And it's not to be forgotten that union members are parents too.

Nobody would think it very wise to try and turn out machine guns and tanks and planes without a well organized group to make sure the product was good. It is certainly as important to turn out strong sinews of the nation, to raise

the children right, as to turn out good guns for killing Fascists.

The unions and the parent-teacher organizations (half of which are now dead on their feet) are certainly the primary groups for solving the educational problems. This leaves out the parents of children below school age who don't belong to unions. These people must organize themselves into groups from the bottom up. It would seem logical that all the parents in a neighborhood, even though their children are not of present school age, be organized into the parent-teacher organizations since the place of the nursery school is logically in the public school system.

It must be remembered that big groups are run by people having paid jobs. Those jobs are often held fast by terrified old gals or men who don't want to lose them. If in the evolution, or revolution, which produces a more democratic organization, a few heads must be cut off, it is just too bad. Does anyone really think Napoleon or the late Russian Czar should have been kept in their jobs for sentimental reasons?

If you find yourself in an undemocratic organization, the only way out is to organize the opposition and when you get a majority in favor of democracy, turn the organization upside down and start it off right. There is no sense just going out and making another organization to compete with the first one, unless you have one of those daisy situations where the leaders of the first and biggest organization not only don't believe in democracy but resort to miscounting the votes in order to preserve their status as

leaders. A bad leadership can usually be thrown out by a hard working majority.

It sounds as though I were leaving out of this picture all the good women's clubs in existence. You don't kill off one thing until you have something better, and we'd be in an awful jam if some of those women's groups stopped functioning. I believe, however, that the days of the separate male and female organization are numbered.

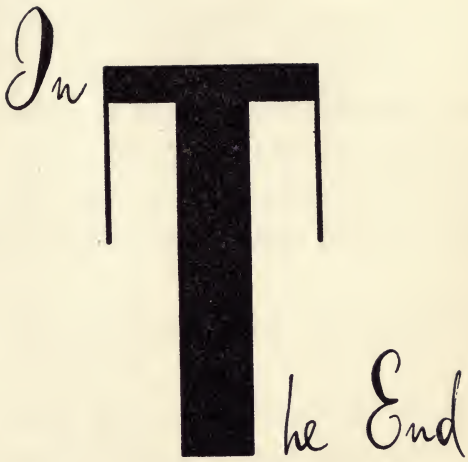
The Common Man's organization is a bi-sexual affair. As the day of the Common Man approaches, all those who look to accomplishing anything ultimately look to the unions. Every one of us will finally be in some sort of union which is organized around our work. Unions will serve as the co-ordinators of our better lives. That, by the way, is what the C.I.O. is now attempting in a campaign to get all their members politically active.

Meanwhile, as Der Tag is not here yet, the Women's Clubs can go along as is until the last minute—or they can greatly increase their influence (we hope for such good things as education and modern housing) by amalgamating with kindred masculine groups. There are university men as well as women. There are business and professional men as well as women, and so on. Why all this boring exclusiveness between the sexes?

The state senators are not the only ones who know that when women get going, they usually end by getting what they want, at whatever cost to nerves, and by throwing however many bricks at anyone or any window in the way. To the extent any male groups want to get anything done,

(over and above a lot of talking and drinking), they'd tie up with women who want the same.

To the extent any of these groups don't want to do anything but enhance their own prestige, let 'em eat cake! Let 'em stew in their own juice! Let them rot!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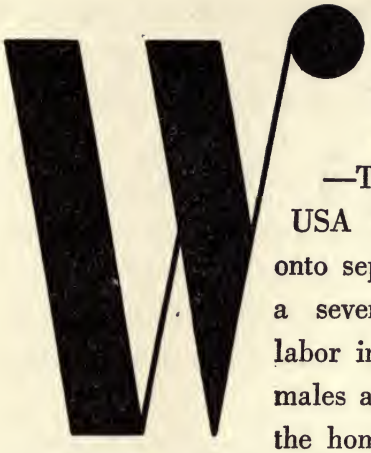

E, THE COMMON PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, SURELY AGREE THAT:

—The males and females of the USA have gotten themselves out onto separate limbs by maintaining a seventeenth-century division of labor in the twentieth century. The males attend solely to work outside the home and the females are officially charged solely with the responsibility for the work within the home.

—It is normal for males and females to marry and produce children.

—Many females are, by their own desire or due to war or economic circumstances, faced with earning money outside their homes. Others wish to exercise their right to be socially useful outside the home as well as within its four walls. It is now impossible for almost all women to function efficiently outside their homes.

—The present methods of running the American Home are not only antiquated but normally result in the female eternally crying and not reaching her full strength—in her not being a woman, an adult female person, but in being a wench, a child, girl, damsel, female servant, or strumpet.

—The present method of running the American Home

results in males having wenches rather than women for wives, thus stunting the growth of the male and making it impossible for the home, the community, and the nation to attain their full strength by men and women working together.

—The present methods of Public Education result in citizens who are not interested in participating in the government of our country to the end that our democracy may attain its full strength, that our Government shall be of the majority of the people, by the majority of the people, and for the majority of the people.

—The means of running the American Home in such a way as to allow all females to function both inside and outside it are now at the disposition of the citizens of the USA.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

—That the males and females of the United States henceforth unite not only for the production of children but also for the purpose of strengthening the American Home by modernizing it, and strengthening the community and the nation, by participating completely in our potentially all-out democratic government.

—That all males and females work seriously together, at once, to see that the type of housing is as soon as possible provided which will permit Wenches to become Women; permit the Home to function efficiently, without servants; and that, pending this eventuality, we cooperate as fully as possible to lighten the housekeeping burden of all females.

—That all males and females work seriously together, at once, to see the type of Public Education is as soon as possible provided which will fit all citizens to take part in a government of the majority of the people, by the majority of the people, for the majority of the people, and that, pending this eventuality, we all educate ourselves as thoroughly as possible to the same end.

—That as long as there is a Fascist in the world, we men and women of the United States dedicate ourselves to his extermination, at whatever sacrifice consistent with maintaining life and health to fight and work, and that we dedicate the winning of the battles and the peace to the Common Man and the Common Woman.

—That, before God, we once and for all finally agree every human being of every color, race, and creed, has an equal right to life, liberty, and happiness.

—That we recognize no individual is free to live happily until all human beings can really live, be free, and be happy.

—That females, as well as males, are human beings.

AB